

# 25 BEAUTIFUL HOMES

## DREAMY COUNTRY LIVING

*Two cottages made into one*

*A new-build bungalow*

*Welsh oak-framed house*

### CONVERTED CHAPEL

*'This was a gamble but it paid off'*



**WIN**  
*Two chairs  
with footstools  
worth over  
£5,000*

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# October 2015



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Splashes of red and cosy fabrics provide a welcoming rural home in County Down, (see page 70).

80



57



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130



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# WELCOME

The housing market is definitely moving fast in our village, where homes that would normally take a good few months to sell are now getting snapped up. It appears that 1970s properties are the most popular – most likely because they have the best views of the valley and they come with a large plot of land. My hope is that the buildings are restored and the gardens remain, rather than being demolished to create space for more houses with less land attached. But I do understand that not everyone enjoys looking after a garden – on some days, when we're reconfiguring space or re-laying gravel, I'm hard pushed to defend my love of gardening. We're in the middle of reorganising our outdoor space, which has partly been driven by us moving the kitchen and also that we no longer need a patch of grass as a small football pitch. The mood boards are piling up, flowerbeds are getting bigger and we finally have the chance to change our plants around. In my mind it will look beautiful, but I do think we need help. Luckily for me, we're launching an interactive six-week online garden design course with KLC School of Design called Successful Gardens. Taught by Chelsea Flower Show gold-medal winner Matthew Childs, I think he'll be able to help me achieve my dreams. If you're interested, visit [klc.co.uk](http://klc.co.uk) or call 020 7376 3377.

DEBORAH BARKER, EDITOR IN CHIEF

*Here are some more ways you can enjoy 25 Beautiful Homes*

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## COMING NEXT MONTH - ON SALE 1 OCTOBER



### WHITE AND WONDERFUL

Natural materials combine with a neutral palette in this contemporary home in Sussex



### COLOUR POP

A vibrant mix of eclectic furnishings adorn this country cottage in Cheshire



### LET THERE BE LIGHT

How a period home in Dublin has been transformed with a sleek and stylish extension

# jewel

THE EDIT



*A sumptuous range of Roman blinds and curtains in rich and intense shades.*



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# OCTOBER

TRENDS | WHAT'S NEW | MUST-HAVE BUYS



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



CHINA BLUE



8

Create a timeless look with classic blue-and-white furniture and accessories inspired by centuries-old china and porcelain designs

**1 TEA TIME**

Loveramics Willow Love Story cake stand, £36, Houseology

**2 SURFACE STYLE**

Early English Delft Egret handpainted tile, 21.5 x 21.5cm, £21 each, Fired Earth

**3 TABLE MANNERS**

Party Porcelain blue-and-white paper napkins, £4 for 20, Talking Tables

**4 POT LUCK**

Fagel blue-and-white large planter, £39, Skandi Home

**5 BEAUTY OF BIRDS**

Summer Palace placemats, £18 for a set of four, Laura Ashley

**6 FLIGHT OF FANCY**

Butterfly cushion, £40, Joules

**7 SMART STORAGE**

China Blue set of three

boxes, £40, Laura Ashley

**8 CHIC SEAT**

Stuff Kentwell armchair in Spring Rhythm Lotus Blue, £1,322, Sofas & Stuff

**9 PITCHER PERFECT**

Russia floral jug, £13, Homesense



2



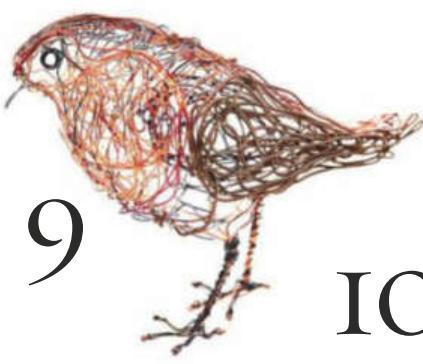
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5



7



IO



## INTO THE WOODS

With autumn upon us, take a cue from nature and use honest materials as a key trend for interiors this season, with furniture and accessories inspired by the countryside

### 1 OFF THE WALL

Fox chalk board, £20, Wyevale Garden Centres

### 2 CREATURE COMFORTS

Hare print cushion, £14, Next

### 3 ENGLAND AT HOME

Fox handpainted ceramic door

knob, £20 each, Graham & Green

### 4 SILVER SERVICE

Cake slice, £12, Butterfly Home by Matthew Williamson at Debenhams

### 5 FALL UPDATE

Woodland oven glove, £14, Cath Kidston

### 6 PRETTY PERCH

Rustic dipped stool in yellow, £55, Vincent and Barn Ltd

### 7 AMBER AUTUMN

Ambassador sofa, £4,478, Delcor

### 8 PERENNIAL FAVOURITES

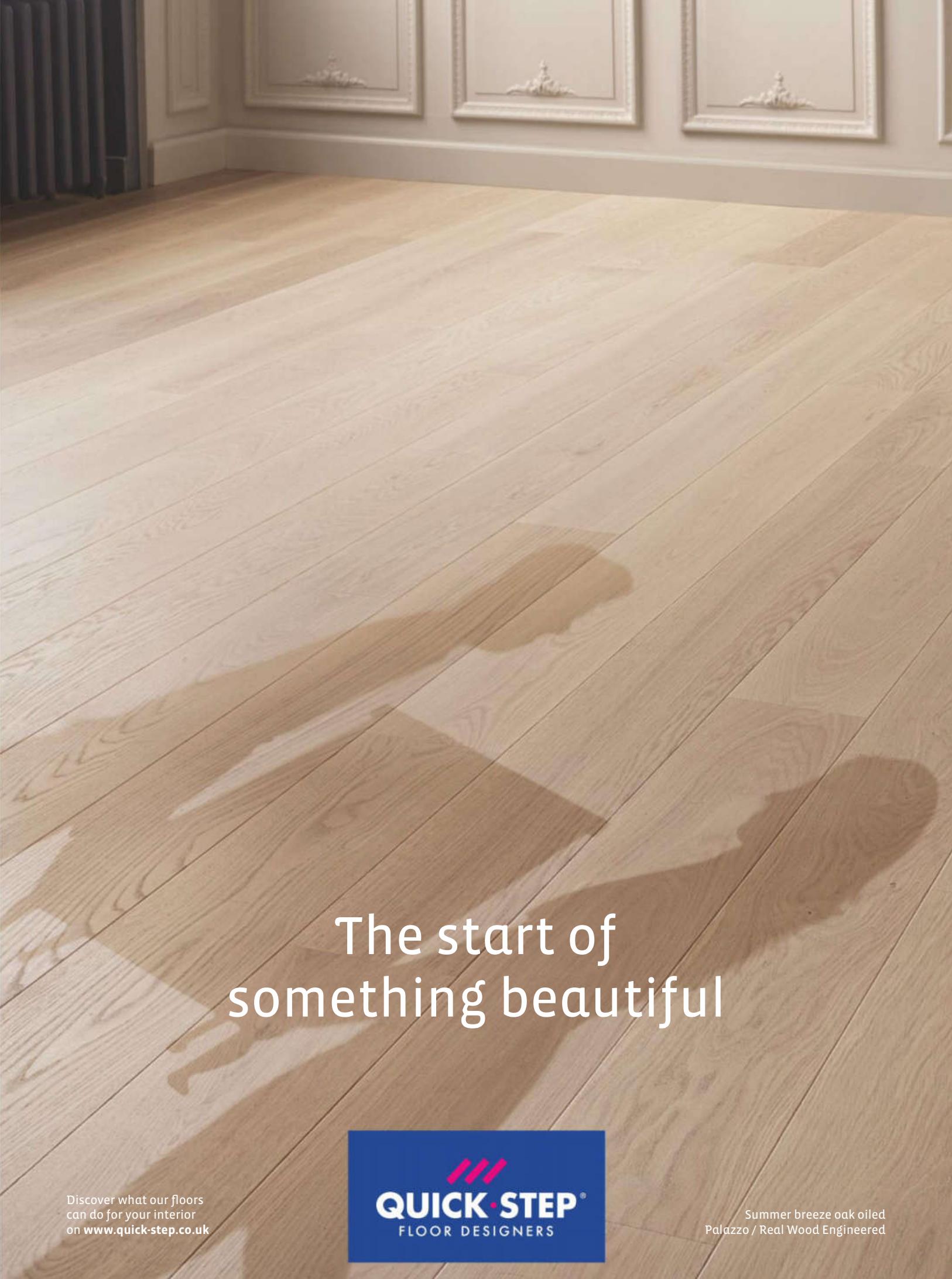
Dorothy cushion cover, £9, IKEA

### 9 SO TWEET

Celia Smith robin wire bird craft kit, suitable for beginners, £50, Twenty Twenty

### 10 GOOD WOOD

Preservatives wooden storage drawers, £35, Homesense



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# Q&A

**Our resident interiors expert  
Rachel Leedham is on hand to  
answer all your decorating queries**

## SQUARE DINING TABLE

**After desperately searching for a square dining table that can seat eight people comfortably, I have had no luck finding something suitable – can you help?**  
**LOUISE BUCKLE, BY EMAIL**

If you prefer contemporary designs, Nest (0114 243 3000, nest.co.uk) has a few offerings, including the ultra-sleek Vanity table by Stefano Giovannoni for Magis, which comes in white, black or a polished frame and top, 140cm sq x H74cm, from £1,768. Calligaris (calligaris.co.uk) also has a few square tables such as the Sigma, which comes in a choice of finishes including a white tempered glass top with a wooden frame, 140cm sq x H75cm, £1,987. It also has the advantage that it can be extended to become a rectangular table of 200cm if you have a larger gathering. Finally, Maisons du Monde (0808 234 2172, maisondumonde.com) sells the robust Stockholm table (shown) in solid Sheesham wood, 140cm sq x H78cm, £500.



## PLASTER RELIEF

**I found an image of a wall display of moulded plaques, which I think are made from plaster. Do you know if anyone sells these?**  
**HELEN REES, GUILDFORD**

The image you spotted is, I believe, from the apartment of 'master plastercaster' Peter Hone, whose home in west London is filled with his casts of architectural fragments. You can find a large selection of Peter's works at Lassco (01844 277188, lassco.co.uk). The pieces span from corbels to large friezes and prices start at £24 for a cast of a Grecian head. Pentreath & Hall (020 7430 2526, pentreath-hall.com) is another source for his plaster reliefs; the bull plaque pictured here, H52 x W76cm, is £450.



## SUBTLE FLORAL FABRIC

**Do you have the details of the fabric used for the blinds in Michelle Barrett's dining area (p65, March 2015)? It would be perfect for a project I'm working on.**  
**ALMA WILLIAMS, BY EMAIL**

This fabric, which beautifully pulls together all the soft hues in Michelle's scheme, is called Hadham (centre), £98m, by Sanderson (0844 543 9500, sanderson-uk.com). It shows a detailed floral trail embroidered on linen mix fabric. The company also offers an intricate block-printed fabric called Solaine (right), viscose mix, £46m. Another suggestion is Celendin (left), linen mix, £91m, Nina Campbell at Osborne & Little (020 8812 3123, osborneandlittle.com), a stylised tree of life jacquard that comes in a soft stone colourway.



**CAST-IRON RADIATOR**

**Can you help me to source a slim radiator (maximum width 55cm) for a narrow wall in my living room? I'd like it to work with the traditional cast-iron radiator we have in the adjoining dining space.**

**PENNY MATTHEWS, BEDFORDSHIRE**

The Cast Iron Reclamation Company (01372 940177, perfect-irony.com) should have something that will work with your existing design, as it has 14 reproduction styles of cast-iron radiator. All models are sold per section so they are available

in a choice of widths, and most also offer a variety of heights. The Neo Classic design starts at £17 per section (H61.5 x W5cm) in a two-column version primed for painting or £26 per section supplied ready painted.

Iconic Radiators (01342 305579, iconicradiators.co.uk) sells a variety of timeless designs including the cast-iron schoolhouse-style Ripon (shown) or the steel multicolumn Romana, which is available as a taller radiator. Both designs are sold in sections, and in the Ripon model, you could have eight four-column sections to achieve a width of H74.8 x 50.8cm, from £360.

**GLAZED DISPLAY CABINET**

**I'd like to have a cabinet similar to the one in Rebecca and Andrew Doyle's dining room (p126, July 2015) and would be very grateful if you could find out where they bought it.**

**RICKY RYDELL, BY EMAIL**

This cabinet looks fabulous, brimming with white ceramics and sparkling glassware. Nordic Style (020 7351 1755, nordicstyle.com) sells antique glazed Swedish cabinets, but they tell me that these tend to be smaller, two-door versions. It is also worth searching on a website that represents a number of different dealers, such as Decorative Collective (decorativecollective.com). For a reproduction cabinet,

the closest match I have found is the three door Rococo cabinet, above, from Gustavian (020 7060 2680, gustavian.com), which comes in a range of paint finishes, H220 x W203 x D45.5cm, £5,800. Pictured here is the two-door version, H209 x W147 x D48cm, £3,600. The Swedish Chair (020 8657 8560, theswedishchair.com) also has a three-door Gustavian dresser, H202 x W160 x D40cm, £3,650.

**NATURAL RUG**

**I love the rug pictured in Suzannah Williams' sitting room (p22, June 2015) and wonder if you know where I could find one that's similar?**

**JODIE HAMMOND, LEICESTERSHIRE**

A woven rug made from a natural material such as coir, jute or seagrass is perfect for adding texture to traditional or more contemporary spaces. West Elm (020 7637 9150, westelm.co.uk) has a great selection of jute bouclé rugs (shown) in a choice of five natural colours – platinum, ivory, iron, flax or clay – and five sizes, one of which is a runner. Prices start at £69 for the smallest size, 91 x 152cm. Ikea (020 3645 0000, ikea.com) recently launched its Sinnerlig range, created in collaboration with renowned British designer Ilse Crawford. It includes a tactile flatwoven seagrass rug, 200 x 300cm, £50, which also comes as a runner, 75 x 200cm, £25.

**GET IN TOUCH**

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**DRAWING ROOM**  
Amanda decorated the main room in colours 'that reflect the landscape outside'. Walls painted in Bone estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres; panelling painted in Pigeon estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, both Farrow & Ball

# GOOD

*Amanda and Edward Bannister turned a*

FEATURE MADELEINE BURBIDGE





# VIBES

*derelict former chapel into a tranquil home*

PHOTOGRAPHY COLIN POOLE



## UNIQUE



## HOME TRUTHS

### THE PROPERTY

Converted chapel, built in 1823

### LOCATION

Wiltshire

**ROOMS** Drawing room, sitting room, kitchen-diner, utility room, four bedrooms (one en suite), two bathrooms, plus a shepherd's hut and potter's studio in the garden

### PURCHASED

2001

### PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We moved here from a house in north London,' says Amanda.

**W**hen Amanda Bannister and her husband Edward bought a 19th-century former Baptist chapel in Wiltshire back in 2001, it was in dreadful repair. ‘Crumbling, riddled with deathwatch beetle and wet rot’ is how Amanda describes it, while the front ‘garden’ was a graveyard with collapsing headstones. What’s more, the couple had no guarantee that they would get planning permission to turn the Grade II listed building into a residence.

That didn’t put them off buying it, though. ‘It was an enormous stone building

in the middle of a field and we knew it had potential,’ says Amanda. Plus Edward, a property lawyer, believed he could find a way through the planning quagmire.

But weren’t they a little spooked by the idea of living in a graveyard? ‘I’m quite a superstitious person and there are places where I feel immediately uncomfortable,’ confides Amanda, ‘but even in its run-down state, the chapel had such a great vibe.’

So the couple went ahead and took a leap into the unknown, and the project turned out to be much easier than they expected. ‘The planning and listed-building officers were

really supportive,’ says Amanda, who submitted plans to restore and extend the property at the back. ‘It did end up going to a committee, but that was only because the building was of architectural significance.’

The Bannisters also discovered that because the land was not consecrated, they would be able to move the graveyard’s headstones. They sought listed-building consent and put notices in the local newspaper alerting descendants of what they were planning to do, and were eventually able to relocate most of them to the side of the chapel. A Commonwealth War Grave



**DRAWING ROOM**  
A nature theme extends to framed butterflies and even a moose's head.  
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Cow Parsley wallpaper,  
£72 per roll, Cole & Son

**DECORATING TIP**  
*‘Paint all the walls white, then wait a while before choosing a colour. That way you get used to the effect of the changing light’*





### SITTING ROOM

Colourful cushions and flooring give this area a modern edge.  
Thistle rug by Christopher Farr for Timorous Beasties, £2,350, Heal's



### KITCHEN-DINER

Amanda wanted this space to have a relaxed, freestanding feel. Beposke Shaker-style island unit by Wardour Workshops. For a similar slate floor try Lakeland Hills Slate, £149.93sqm, Fired Earth



### MEG'S BEDROOM

Pretty floral curtains give the bunk bed a feminine feel.

Tulip & Roses curtain fabric, £65m, Cabbage & Roses. Sleigh bunk bed, from £629 unpainted, Bumpstuff



### MASTER BEDROOM

Patterned fabrics add pizzazz to this scheme's clean lines.

For similar curtain fabric try Les Toiles du Soleil, from £29m. Mondo blanket, £140 (150 x 180cm), Melin Tregwynt



### GUEST BEDROOM

The cushions, blind and orange lampshade were all handmade. Bird Garden by Mark Hearld blind and curtain fabric in red and charcoal, £54m, St Jude's



### BATHROOM

Bright blue apothecary bottles bring a splash of colour to the slate tiles.

Try Etsy or eBay for similar vintage bottles

headstone, however, remains in situ and the couple have a legal obligation to maintain it.

As you enter their home via the portico, you step into the drawing room (which the family still call 'The Chapel'), where sermons were once heard. Walls reach up to 25ft high and the original panelled gallery wraps around three of the room's walls. At first, as no structural changes were needed, the Bannisters just painted the room white and installed a woodburning stove. It was another six or seven years before they chose a colour scheme. The natural shades provide an idyllic pastoral backdrop for their collection of flora and fauna curios. Up in the gallery, there's a desk where the couple's

children – Jack, 16, Freddy, 13, and Meg, 9 – often do their homework, with shelving behind, filled with Edward's history and nature books. Back downstairs, through double doors, the kitchen-diner was once a meeting room. Shaker-style cherry wood units are stocked with ceramics handmade by Amanda, who has a studio in the garden.

In the new extension, which complements the lines of the old chapel, there's also a family sitting room. Here, and throughout the home, including the four bedrooms upstairs, all the curtains, blinds and cushions are by soft furnishings expert Sian Colley, whom Amanda has worked with for years. As for the outside, after buying land

from the neighbouring farm, the chapel is now set in about four acres, most of which is meadow. 'There's also a vegetable and fruit garden that produces enough to feed us all,' says Amanda. 'When we have guests stay overnight in the summer, they get to sleep in a shepherd's hut, complete with a bed inside, situated beside the vegetable patch. It's a place where people who spend time there can relax and unwind.'

After living almost 15 years in the chapel, Amanda says she, Edward and their three children are 'wedded to the place'. It's a home where life seems to slow down. 'Buying this property was a gamble,' says Amanda. 'Luckily, it's one that paid off.' **25**



## FAVOURITE SHOP

*'I love Another Country on London's Crawford Street. It sells beautiful furniture and homewares, and is a modern take on classic country style'*



## SHEPHERD'S HUT

This is a guest 'room' and a place to work. Solid-oak desk, £1,030; lacquered red chair, £465, both Another Country



REPLANNED

## HOME TRUTHS

**THE PROPERTY** Detached 19th-century farmhouse

**LOCATION**

Pembrokeshire, Wales

**ROOMS** Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, TV room, gym, two cloakrooms, four bedrooms, two bathrooms

**PURCHASED** 2010

**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**  
‘We have a house in London, but we bought this place to use as a holiday home as we love this part of Wales,’ says Kathryn.

# Change of PLANS

**SITTING ROOM**

‘We often have friends and family come to stay, so we brought the leather sofa bed with us from our London property,’ says Kathryn.

Charlotte leather sofa in Rialto Bruno, £2,000, John Lewis. Kentwell sofa in cream, from £1,154, Sofas & Stuff. Upholstered cube, from £239, Melin Tregwynt

***Patience and perseverance were required while Kathryn and Dai Clement waited for permission to remodel their dated farmhouse***

FEATURE ANNA TOBIN | PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH



#### SITTING ROOM

This intimate seating area is the perfect place to relax and curl up with a good book.

Alderney armchair, £580, Sofa.com, is similar. Throws, from £115 each; cushions, from £45 each, all Melin Tregwynt

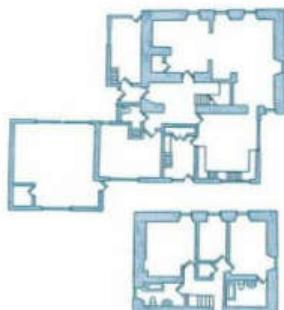


**K**athryn Clement and her husband Dai had been casually looking to buy a home in their favourite county, Pembrokeshire, for several months. 'We were expecting it to take quite a few years until the right property came along,' says Kathryn. 'Farmhouses in this area are often passed down through generations and rarely come on the market. So when this place came up for sale, we had to make a lot of quick decisions.'

Very little had been done to the Georgian farmhouse in the 40 years the previous owners had lived there. 'It was decorated in a 1970s style, the heating and wiring were antiquated and it was in a general state of disrepair,' recalls Kathryn. However, the garden had been well maintained and there was also a swimming pool within the grounds and a stream meandering through. So the couple knew it had the potential to become the house where they and their two children Livi, 8, and Ed, 6, could spend their holidays.

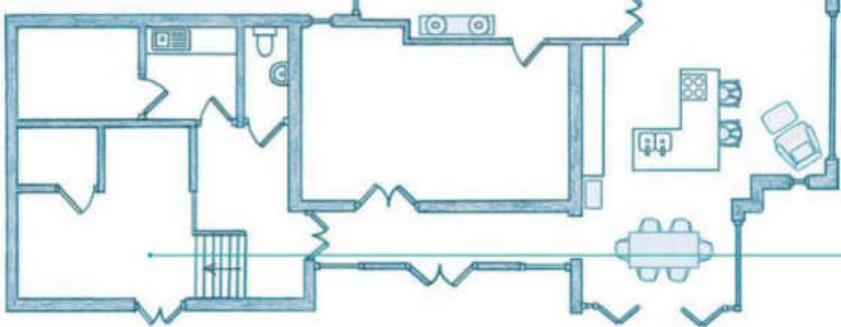
What they didn't foresee, however, was how long it would take to turn the dilapidated farmhouse into a welcoming family home. 'We wanted to retain the original building, but replace the 1970s

## BEFORE



## AFTER

## GROUND FLOOR



## FIRST FLOOR



## NEW LOOK

What was a garage now houses a gym, steam room, changing area and plant room, which opens to the outdoor pool.



## KITCHEN-DINER

An overhang provides a roomy breakfast bar area where chairs can be tucked neatly underneath.

Zirconium worktop, from £600m, the Platinum range at Silestone. Four Oslo bar stools with back, £200, Simply Bar Stools, are a match

**BEST BUY** *'I love the porcelain floor in the hall and kitchen – it looks great, is easy to clean and was more affordable than limestone'*



#### KITCHEN-DINER

The S-shaped island unit is positioned so that wherever you're working, you can look out on to the garden beyond.

Bespoke cabinet with Shaker-style doors, from £495 for a 650mm base unit, Lawrence Lyons. Units painted in Slipper Satin estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball

extension and double garage with something more aesthetically pleasing. We also wanted to build a cover over the pool so that we could use it all year round,' explains Kathryn.

As the property is situated within the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, the family knew it would be advantageous to use a local design firm who were familiar with the area's planning laws. 'Our estate agent recommended the architectural firm Kinver Kreations,' says Kathryn. 'We established an instant rapport with the director, Tom Kinver, and we knew he could achieve exactly what we wanted.'

Getting their plans approved, however, was an arduous task. After several amendments, permission was finally granted two years later in 2012. 'They wouldn't let us change the property's footprint,' explains



Kathryn. 'So while we could knock down the garage and the old extension, we had to rebuild in the area they occupied. So the garage became the gym, changing room and plant room – we couldn't bring the swimming pool indoors as it would have increased the overall square footage of the house. In addition, the new rear extension was originally going to be made entirely from glass, but we ended up having to mix it with some oak for a slightly more traditional touch.'

When work eventually began, the property was stripped down to just three skeletal walls. From these bare bones, an improved house emerged with new wiring, plumbing and underfloor heating. Some of the building's materials were reused or reclaimed to retain the farmhouse's period style. A fourth bedroom was added over the top of the



**CHILDREN'S BEDROOM**

**Plenty of floor space provides a great play area.**

Oliver bunk bed, £649, Feather & Black. Scion Mr Fox cushions, £40 each, John Lewis. Mr Fox blind fabric, £22.10m, Fashion Interiors

**MASTER BEDROOM**

**'The exposed rafters add character,' says Kathryn.**

Sitting firm side table, £199, John Lewis. Lampshade, £65, Thornback & Peel

**FUTURE PLANS**

**'Although we chose a plain palette to begin with, we'd like to introduce some more colour in the future'**

**GUEST BEDROOM**

**The crog loft is one of Livi and Ed's favourite hangouts.**

Windsor quaker armchair, £405, Ercol. Rabbit and Cabbage cushion, £60, Thornback & Peel

kitchen and the ceilings were removed to reveal the original timbers. A traditional Welsh crog loft, which is accessed by a permanent ladder from one of the bedrooms, was also created.

When it came to the interior decor, Kathryn wanted to keep everything simple and uncluttered. 'I was after a very pared-down look with a clean, unfussy colour scheme,' she explains. 'And as I knew we'd be living a very outdoorsy life when we were here, entailing lots of muddy, sandy feet, I went for easy-to-clean stone-style flooring throughout most of the ground level combined with hard-wearing sisal carpet upstairs.' To keep the house rooted in its natural surroundings, the couple have also tried to source locally produced accessories wherever they can.

Despite the many revisions the couple had to make to their original plans, they are thrilled with the final result. 'It's a fantastic place where we can escape and spend quality time with family and close friends,' says Kathryn. 'As soon as we leave, the children are already counting down the days until we'll come back.' **25**

**BATHROOM**

**This roll-top tub is perfectly positioned.** Boardwalk Maple flooring, £120m sq, Stone & Ceramic Warehouse. Astonian Verona bath, from £1,000, Aston Matthews

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**DRAWING ROOM**

Also known as the India room, this is the couple's chill-out space, and it has a very different atmosphere from the rest of the ground floor, which is open plan.

Kallax/Dröna wall unit, from £700, Ikea. Maharani Indian Charpoi daybed, £1,299, Zedds, is comparable. Cushions, from £30, Kelly Hoppen

# EAST MEETS WEST

*Asian treasures from Jane and Mark Lawson's travels add a spiritual dimension to their transformed 1930s home*

FEATURE TRICIA WELCH | PHOTOGRAPHY ROBERT SANDERSON



NEW-BUILD

## HOME TRUTHS

**THE PROPERTY**

Remodelled 1930s detached

**LOCATION**

Southwest London

**ROOMS**

Hall, drawing room, sitting room/kitchen-diner, study, utility room, five bedrooms (all en suite)

**PURCHASED** 2013**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**

'We moved from a remodelled 1950s detached nearby,' says Jane.

**SITTING ROOM/KITCHEN-DINER**

A large rug helps to separate and define these areas.  
 Airport sofa, £12,000 for two; Italian kitchen, £22,000,  
 both Poliform. Coffee table, £2,000; large pots, £500  
 for two, both Majid Antiques. Bespoke rug, £1,000,  
 Borderline. Cushions, from £50, Kelly Hoppen



**INSPIRATIONS** 'Most of our design ideas come from our travels. We truly appreciate the craftsmanship, natural materials and love that goes into the handmade objects and artefacts we've collected from the Far East'

**H**aving not long finished renovating a 1950s property in southwest London, Jane and Mark Lawson weren't looking to move, until Mark discovered a run-down 1930s house nearby. 'It had a lot of potential so he suggested we buy it and start all over again,' explains Jane, who wasn't so keen on the idea. The house was dilapidated and unloved, but it was only when the couple viewed it that they realised how firmly it was stuck in a time warp and how much work would be involved in bringing it up to date.

The building was riddled with damp and rot and hadn't been decorated in decades. There was an Anderson shelter in the garden and an antiquated boiler room inside. The rest was a warren of small, dark and dingy rooms. 'We knew this was going to be a major project, but we were shocked by how little we could rescue,' says Jane. 'We had hoped to preserve the shell of the house but the mortar between the bricks had perished so badly that a lot of the walls had to be pulled down.' The couple now consider it a blessing as it meant they could be more

ambitious. 'The house had to be rebuilt,' says Jane. As a result, after gaining planning permission, they set about enlarging the footprint and adding a third floor.

But first Jane, who is a firm believer in harmonising a space within its environment, called in a feng shui expert during the design stage. 'I wanted to encourage a positive energy to circulate throughout the house and ensure that potential obstacles such as walls or doors were put in the right places,' she says.

Perhaps the most striking feature architecturally is the open-plan ground floor. Neutral, but not stark, the palette throughout is pale grey with navy paintwork. Huge white floor tiles laid in a linear pattern enhance the sense of freshness and space on this level, while dark stained wood on the upper floors provide contrast. 'We'd previously lived in a Huf Haus,' explains Jane, 'and are fans of this design ethic. We appreciate the clean lines and structural elements of its minimal look. Plus, we love the emphasis on glass and the continuity of one area flowing into another.'

However, it would be a mistake to think that the house is a shrine to minimalism, for

against the contemporary background, Jane and Mark's unusual artefacts take centre stage. 'I was born in Malaya,' explains Jane, a Buddhist, 'and those early memories of the Far East have made a huge impression.'

The couple share a love of Eastern artefacts and have sourced most of their furniture, artwork and objects from their travels. 'Mark's hobby is high altitude trekking and on one of his early trips to Africa he came back with a hand-carved wooden statue – this was just the start of his collecting,' says Jane. Twenty years on, they have acquired stone from the Coromandel Coast of India, artefacts from Tangier, and many Buddhas from Delhi, Jaipur, Cambodia and Nepal. Perhaps the most prominent examples of their passion for collecting is in their 'India room'. Here, most items are from Nepal including exquisite handmade day beds, which offer the perfect place to curl up and relax after a busy day.

'Although this project seemed very daunting when we first took it on, it's become our own little haven,' says Jane. 'It just goes to show what a difference a year can make.'

#### MASTER BATHROOM

**'I wanted this to feel like a spa, hence the luxurious egg-shaped bath and indulgent touches,' says Jane.**  
Lagoon freestanding bath, £1,799; MyPlan cabinets in Wenge, from £99 each, all Bathstore, would suit this look



#### MASTER BEDROOM

**There is a focus on natural materials and authentic furnishings throughout, including the leather bed and linen furnishings.**  
Aurora real leather cream bed frame is near-identical, £289, SleepKings. Bedding and cushions, from £45, Kelly Hoppen



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**NEW-BUILD****HOME TRUTHS****THE PROPERTY**

Detached new-build

**LOCATION** Powys**BUILT** 2009

**ROOMS** Sitting room, kitchen-diner, day room, snug, study, three bedrooms (one en suite), bathroom

**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**

'We divide our time between here and our coach house in Kent,' says Annie.

# MATERIAL GAINS

Using natural elements gave Annie and Gordon Campbell's home the wow factor

FEATURE SEÁN O'CONNELL | PHOTOGRAPHY MARK BOLTON

**SITTING ROOM**

'The quirky style of the fireplace perfectly suits that of the vaulted beams,' says Gordon. Clearview 750 stove, price on application, Clearview Stoves. Fireplace stone, price on request, HV Bowen & Sons. For a similar coffee table try the Mandara, £695, Lombok



I

## BEST BUY 'I love our slate flooring – we also used it on the terrace outside to

2



**A**nnie and Gordon Campbell are full of bright ideas, and that's why the creation of their home was such a happy affair. While looking around a cottage in rural Powys with a view to buying, the couple spotted a run-down barn next door. 'We quickly arranged a viewing,' says Gordon, 'and almost as soon as we walked in, Annie said, "Wow, look at that view".' We were both awestruck by the amazing scenery of the Mid-Wales valleys and the mountains beyond.

The Campbells snapped up the barn with the intention of renovating it, as it came with planning permission. 'But then we discovered the old frame was actually shot to pieces, so we applied to put a new one in its place.' A local joiner recommended a company called Welsh Oak Frame, says Gordon. 'Their architect came up with a design that suited us and which we felt reflected the character of the barn we'd replaced. We also made our own tweaks and additions – one of our main stipulations was that the building should have an open feel with an abundance of glass and wood.' Once permission had been granted, they were ready to go.

Firstly, Welsh Oak Frame laid the foundations of the house, before building the oak frame and taking it to weathertight stage. 'When they'd finished, our builders came in to take it to completion,' says Gordon. But although the Campbells had a good team in place, they did face one major obstacle – the weather.

With the plot being sited in a remote location and up a narrow lane, access was never going to be easy, but things were about to get

even more complicated. 'The summer of 2008 was one of the worst summers on record and it just rained constantly,' says Gordon. 'I remember one particular day when it was pouring down and there were about a dozen vehicles on site, some of which were stuck in the mud. I must admit, there were moments when I wondered what we'd let ourselves in for, but slowly it came together.'

February of the following year saw the structure completed, at which point the Campbells turned their attention to the interior. 'In the same way Gordon had been in charge of the build, I took the reins with the interior,' says Annie. The couple realised that if they got the basics right, the rest would follow, so they started with the flooring. Slate being synonymous with Wales, it seemed the natural choice – as well as serving to soften the abundance of wood on show. 'It has its own special warmth, too – even more so as we've installed

### 1 SITTING ROOM

**Slate flooring creates a dramatic contrast against the oak beams.** Eva sofa, £1,230, Sofa Workshop. Urban slate floor tiles in black/grey, £29.94sq m, Fired Earth, are a match

### 2 SNUG

**'This was going to be our study, until we decided it was better as a chill-out area,' says Gordon.** Torben Lind-style modular sofa in black leather, £369, Vita Interiors, is comparable. G-Plan sideboard, price on request, Vintage Retro

### 3 DAY ROOM

**Comfort is key in this cosy space.** Marcel Breuer Wassily-style chair, £269, Vita Interiors, has this look. For similar sofas try the Robertson, £3,199, Sofa Workshop. Pavilion floor lamp, £300, John Lewis

### 4 KITCHEN-DINER

**Pine units were painted white for a fresh look.** Cabinetry, price on request, Pineland Furniture; painted in French Gray estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



3

*'make it feel like it was part of the interior of the house when the lights are on'*



4



1



2

underfloor heating everywhere,' says Gordon. The Campbells are advocates of helping local trade, so many of the materials used in the house were sourced nearby, notably the stone for the sitting room fireplace. Considering it is one of the single most striking features in the house, the chimney breast had unlikely origins. 'We found out at the last minute that we needed to come up with a design for it,' says Gordon, 'so Annie sketched an idea on a scrap of paper on the way to meet the designer. Looking at it now, it couldn't be more perfect.'

Certain other aspects were given more time and consideration. 'We realised that with ceilings as high as these we'd need to position the lighting quite low down in order to create a warm, intimate feel and not just illuminate the ceiling,' says Annie. 'For a consistent style throughout the house, all the main lighting, apart from the kitchen

downlighters, came from Jim Lawrence, who were even happy to adapt some of their own designs for low-voltage usage.'

When it came to the furniture, the couple were quite relaxed. 'We already had a lot of items that worked well, including some inherited pieces,' says Annie. Kitchen appliances, too, were bought on a budget. 'We wanted an Aga, but it would have meant reinforcing the floor so we opted for a range cooker,' she continues. 'Most of our appliances came from the local electrical shop, who undercut the department stores for price. By shopping around, we did the whole kitchen for £12,000.'

The couple made savings upstairs, too. 'We're big recyclers so we painted an old G-Plan dressing table in the bedroom,' says Annie. 'With this place, we have the satisfaction of knowing we've made our own mark. That's why we love this house – it says everything about us.' 25

### 1 LANDING

**The bespoke wrought-iron stair rail adds an elegant touch.**  
Banisters made, price on application, Nic Westermann. Bespoke staircase, Simon Moorhouse Fine Furniture. Kilfinan lantern, £479, Jim Lawrence

### 2 OFFICE

**Well furnished and chic, this is the perfect place to catch up on emails.**  
Original rustic solid oak desk, £600, Oak Furnitureland, is near-identical. Rigdale wood storage accent bench, £300, Wayfair, has this look

### 3 MASTER EN SUITE

**A freestanding bath is perfectly situated under the window to make the most of the idyllic views.**  
Cambridge bath, £650, Bathstore. Wooden bath tidy is an alternative, £45, The White Company

### 3 MASTER BEDROOM

**All-white furnishings and natural wood help this space feel relaxing.**  
For a similar bed frame try the Rosetti, £325, Feather & Black. Linea Clarence chandelier in antique brass, £200, House of Fraser, is comparable

3



4





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# Insight

## BUILDING AN OAK-FRAMED HOUSE

**Inspired by Annie and Gordon's oak-framed home? Take the first steps towards building your own**



Oak-framed houses date back to Tudor times, and their elegant curved braces, exposed internal timbers and oak-pegged joints have enjoyed a revival in recent years. This reflects the rise in the number of new self-builds, which now account for 10-15 per cent of home building, as well as the popularity of turnkey packages that take the stress out of building your own home.

### Planning your self-build

With a wide range of styles and designs available, it is worth contacting a number of oak-framing firms and studying their portfolios. Many companies offer a fully bespoke service, guiding clients from the designing and planning stage through to construction and completion. Preparing and signing off the design takes around six weeks, with the planning process taking a further 12. Delivery timescales depend on the size and extent of the work to be carried out, but a typical three-bedroom cottage-size

oak-frame will arrive on site around 10-12 weeks after signing the contract.

### Why choose oak-framing?

Oak-framed houses will often cost in excess of £1,400sq m (although, with some careful budgeting, it is possible to build one for around £1,000sq m). There are certainly cheaper ways of building – conventional masonry and softwood timber frame being the most common – but green-oak framing offers undoubted advantages.

One of the most eco-friendly construction materials, oak is both carbon-neutral and sustainable – new trees are planted to replace those felled and because oak is a natural product, the frames don't require large amounts of energy to manufacture. As the frame is made off-site and erected in just a few days, construction times can be quicker – a vital factor for many self-builders, particularly those living in rented accommodation or paying a self-build mortgage.

### PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

'Oak framing is a versatile construction method. Not only is it ideal for those who want to build a new home with the character of a period property, but it also works well with modern designs – we're often asked to incorporate large glass panels and contemporary bifold doors.'

**Although it's a time-honoured craft, it is now possible to use state-of-the-art technology to build traditional, barn-style and post-and-beam oak-frames to precise degrees of accuracy.**

Once the frame has been drying out for a number of years, you will experience changes in the texture and see distinctive cracks appearing, which makes this material so appealing. It's during this process that the wood becomes harder and stronger, tightening to a level where insects are unable to penetrate and attains such high density that it has increased resistance to fire.

**One of the beauties of an oak-framed house is that the structure is virtually maintenance-free. The timber doesn't require treating, although some people choose to give the internal frame a light oiling to enhance the colour of the wood.'**

**MARK JONES, WELSH OAK FRAME**

### ADDRESS BOOK

**Welsh Oak Frame 01686 688000, [welshoakframe.com](http://welshoakframe.com)**

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A traditional-style build is a great match for oak-frames



Oak frames also work with a more Scandinavian look



**EXPERT EYE** 'Keep things simple and allow the beauty of the structure to shine through. Opt for a neutral palette and natural materials, adding colour with textiles. Good lighting is essential – illuminated beams can look stunning'

**SOPHIA WADSWORTH, INTERIOR DESIGNER**

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## REPLANNED



## HOME TRUTHS

## THE PROPERTY

Early Victorian terraced house

## LOCATION

East London  
Rooms Hall, sitting room,  
kitchen-diner, study, cloakroom,  
two bedrooms, bathroom

## PURCHASED

2011

## PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'I rented a Victorian terrace  
to get a feel of the area before  
I bought this place,' says Jemima.

# GRAND designs

*Jemima Garthwaite's ambitious extension proves that a modest budget doesn't mean you can't think big*

FEATURE RACHEL LEEDHAM | PHOTOGRAPHY GAP IMAGES/ANNA BATCHELOR



## KITCHEN-DINER

The range of natural materials – from Norwegian spruce to concrete – help merge the garden with the interior.

Plywood from Blumsom Timber Centre; machine cut by CNC Workshop; carpentry by James Yeo, all price on application. White industrial large enamel shade, £140, Urban Cottage Industries, is similar



#### SNUG

**Lightly whitewashed timber cladding helps this feel like a separate area.**  
Palmeral cushion fabric in White/Green and Midnight/Green, £75m, House of Hackney.  
Geometric lights, £90 for three, Nick Fraser



Living on site through major building works comes with a great deal of stress – so

imagine experiencing that disruption over the best part of three years. That's what Jemima Garthwaite chose to do when she extended an early-Victorian terraced house in east London. 'I had a small budget but I wanted to push the boundaries, so I had to do a lot of the work myself,' she says. 'When the funds ran out and the builders left, the extension had no wiring or plaster on the walls. There wasn't even a proper floor.'

Jemima's new structure, which replaces a rickety lean-to extension, is the result of a close collaboration between her and her friend, architect Tom Kaneko. 'Tom and I studied architecture together, although I went into

advertising,' she explains. 'When he moved to London, I had just bought this house but I still had a few months' lease on a property I was renting nearby. I suggested Tom should move into the house for a while so he could understand the building and help me with the plans.'

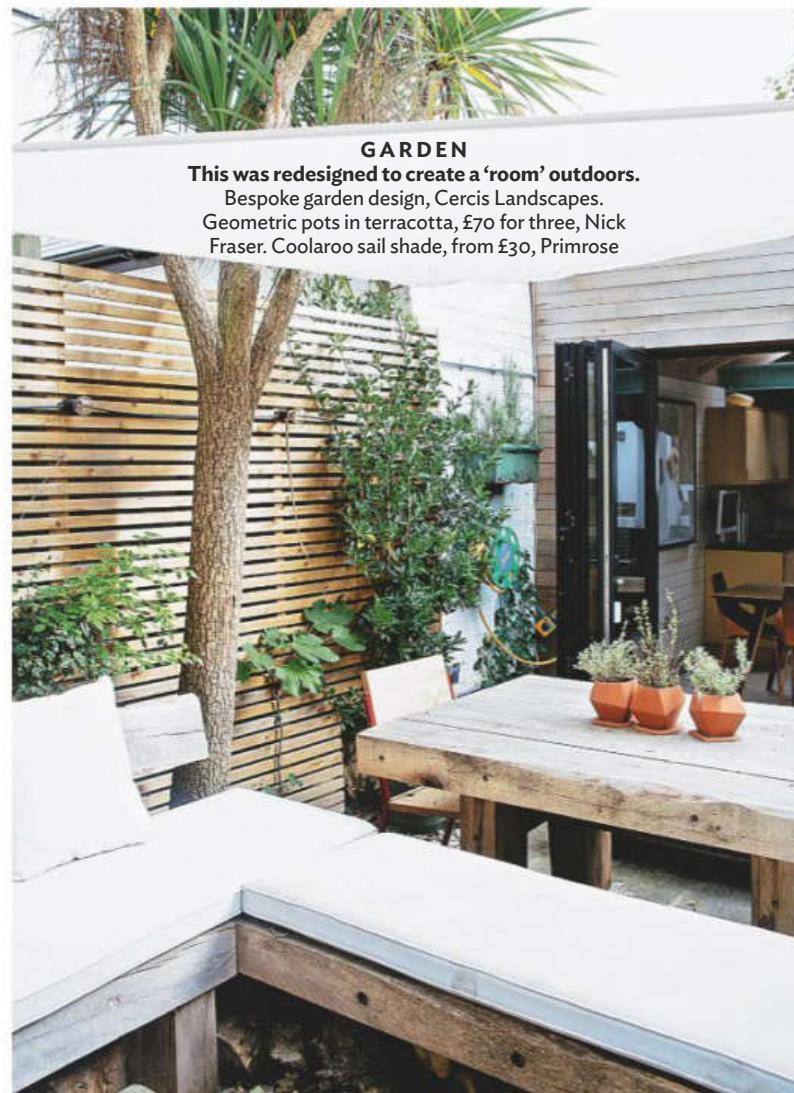
The design the pair came up with is a bold pitched structure featuring exposed timber rafters and horizontal boards, which create a dramatic contrast with the traditional part of the house. It provides a connection with the garden that the original house lacked. 'I wanted a room for cooking, eating and living that felt very light and natural,' says Jemima.

'From the start, we tried to find ways of turning raw construction materials into something beautiful,' she continues. And the kitchen cabinets are an ingenious



#### KITCHEN-DINER

**Copper chairs add warmth to this industrial-style space.**  
Tapered ply table, £1,450, Unto This Last.  
Blu Dot Real Good copper chair, £250,  
Heal's. Artwork, London's Kerning  
poster, £100 (unframed), NB Studio



#### GARDEN

**This was redesigned to create a 'room' outdoors.**  
Bespoke garden design, Cercis Landscapes.  
Geometric pots in terracotta, £70 for three, Nick  
Fraser. Coolaroo sail shade, from £30, Primrose

**SITTING ROOM**

**A collection of artwork in an array of frames creates interest.**

Brown wax Victorian pine floorboards, from £69m sq, The Reclaimed Flooring Company, have this look

**SITTING ROOM**

**'I revived family heirlooms by having them reupholstered in linen and leather,' says Jemima.**

Upholstery, price on application, 7 Upholstery. It's About Romi Hollywood floor lamp, £450, John Lewis, is a good alternative

design that proves this is possible. Made from ply, the components were cut based on 3D drawings and then assembled by a carpenter. 'It was like a gigantic jigsaw puzzle,' says Jemima.

Some tweaks were made to the original part of the house, most notably in the double reception room where a section of the hall wall was removed to open up the space. 'I wanted sight lines from both the entrance and the sitting room fireplace all the way through to the garden,' explains Jemima.

In order to reveal the rugged brick walls, Jemima roped in her mother to chisel away the plaster from the chimney breast in the sitting room, and she did the same in the master bedroom. For the other bedroom walls, Jemima decided to go for a traditional Moroccan plaster treatment. 'I did this at the outset before

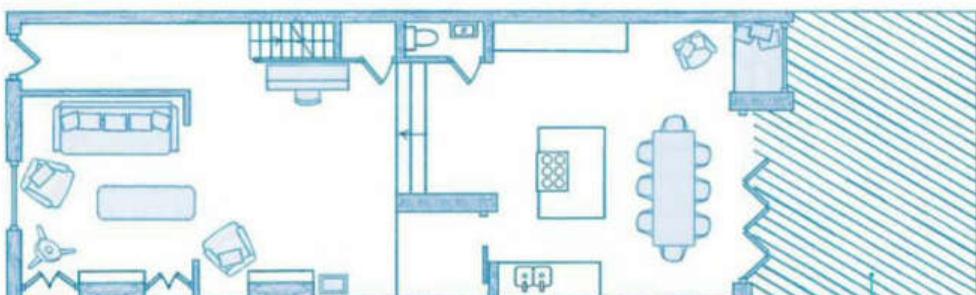
the reality of the full cost of the project became apparent,' she says. 'It looks wonderful, but it's an expense I couldn't really justify.'

Elsewhere, Jemima has carefully budgeted by hunting down bargains, such as the dining table that she found on eBay. The Freecycle Network was another resource that led to some great finds, including the track lighting in the kitchen. 'This came from the Geffrye Museum, which was upgrading its lighting to an LED system,' she explains.

It is thanks to Jemima's resourcefulness and ingenuity, not to mention a huge amount of energy, that this classic Victorian house has entered a new phase. As she explains, 'It was beautiful in winter but now it's glorious in summer, too. The natural materials make it feel so quiet and tranquil, that sometimes I can't believe I'm in London.'



## A F T E R

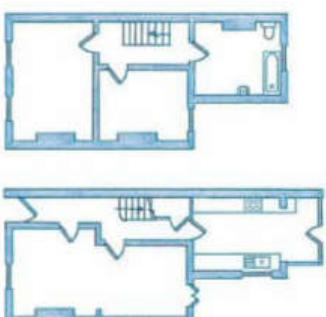


GROUND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

## B E F O R E



### REPLANNED

Jemima and her architect friend, Tom Kaneko, came up with a design that used timber rafters and horizontal boards to replace the original lean-to. The style of the extension has an industrial look, which is quite different to the rest of the house, but it helps interlink the garden and the interior.



**DECORATING TIP** 'Make great, inexpensive wall art by taking pages out of magazines and design books and putting them in frames'



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# RURAL RETREAT

An old, charming farmhouse was the perfect change of pace for Victoria Hall and Dan Shepherd, who craved a rural way of life

FEATURE NAOMI JONES | PHOTOGRAPHY ROBERT SANDERSON

**LESSON LEARNT** ‘If you’re looking to move to a new area, renting is helpful to see if it’s the right place for you – if that’s not possible, hire a holiday home for a couple of weeks in different seasons’



#### KITCHEN

‘The rustic floor is always warm underfoot thanks to the Aga,’ says Victoria. Four-oven cast-iron range cooker, from £8,925, Aga. Montague oak extending dining table is similar, £525, The Cotswold Company. Chicken oven glove, £18; Pheasant mug, £16, both Cluck Cluck!



#### INSPIRING



#### HOME TRUTHS

##### THE PROPERTY

Farmhouse, built circa 1570

##### LOCATION

Suffolk

**ROOMS** Hall, sitting room, kitchen, dining room, study, playroom, five bedrooms (three en suite), bathroom

##### PURCHASED

2010

##### PREVIOUS PROPERTY

‘Before we moved here, we lived in an early-Victorian house in London,’ says Victoria.



**STUDY**  
Inspired by the Suffolk countryside, Victoria is always making something.



**STAIRS**  
Original beams reflect the age of the house.

**F**ive years ago, Victoria Hall, an artist, and her husband Dan, were looking to relocate from London to somewhere more rural. ‘We wanted our children, Thomas, 10, and Matilda, 8, to have a similar upbringing to us – a home that was within easy reach of good schools, close to their grandparents and in the countryside,’ says Victoria. That’s when they came across this Grade II listed 16th-century farmhouse in Suffolk. ‘It was ideal for us as it didn’t require much work – we knew we didn’t want to take on a big project, we just wanted to get on with living the country lifestyle,’ she explains.

Throughout the years, the property has been sympathetically extended. ‘The Georgians added the brick façade, which is where the red Virginia creeper grows during the autumn,’ says Victoria. ‘The Victorians added their own touch, too, with a spacious kitchen and a

hard-wearing flagstone floor that we still have today.’ In recent decades, former owners reconfigured the layout to suit modern life, reassigning rooms, converting the loft, adding en suites and resiting the stairs.

Although there wasn’t much to do structurally, the couple did update a few things. ‘We replaced the rotten windows and French windows, refitted two dated bathrooms, changed the ancient boiler, and over a period of two years, repainted the entire house,’ says Victoria. ‘We did a quick makeover on the kitchen, too. As the solid-wood units are so sturdy and fitted with such good-quality granite worktops, we simply painted them and added an electric oven so that we don’t have to rely on the Aga all year round.’

This time- and money-saving approach has been employed at every level of the renovation. Victoria and Dan kept what worked



#### SITTING ROOM

With plenty of white woodwork and light-coloured furniture, the bold blue wall colour makes this space feel cosy.

Bluebell three-seater sofa in Herringbone, £1,340; Ottoman footstool, from £195, both Sofa.com. Walls painted in Stiffkey Blue estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Sisal carpet, from £42sq m, Crucial Trading

**DECORATING TIP** ‘Be brave with colour, but bear in mind any other elements – including the amount of natural light and any woodwork to highlight the shade’



#### MASTER BEDROOM

**Sumptuous fabrics and French-inspired furnishings add an air of elegance and luxury in here.**

Chateau triple mirror dressing table, £838, Sweetpea & Willow, is a good match. Plume Citrine pillowcases, £25 per pair, Living by Christiane Lemieux at House of Fraser

and changed what didn’t. ‘We repainted three of the walls in our bedroom,’ says Victoria, ‘but left one in the existing sandy beige colour as it was a good backdrop for a canvas we wanted to hang there.’ Likewise, the flooring throughout hasn’t been touched. ‘We inherited sisal carpet that still has years of life left in it,’ she says. ‘And there were beautiful wall lights in the sitting room and bedroom that we loved, so they’ve stayed, too. We’ve saved and reused whatever possible so that we could spend money where it was needed.’

No doubt due to her artistic profession, Victoria is just as careful with her colour selection and knows when to be restrained and when to experiment with bolder hues. ‘I painted the sitting room a deep blue,’ she says. ‘Somehow,

it feels fresh during warmer months yet still works on cold dark days – when the fire is lit, it’s very cosy.’ She has teamed this blue with yellow and orange accessories to keep the look vibrant. Cushions and autumnal gourds add pattern and texture as well as colour, and give the room a modern twist. ‘We may have left the city behind, but I’m not ready to embrace a purely traditional country style just yet,’ says Victoria.

The family’s rural home and its resident brood of hens has also provided inspiration for Victoria’s bird-themed homeware business, which she runs from home and juggles with family life. ‘It’s been a change of pace that suits us perfectly,’ says Victoria. ‘The countryside is a great place to live – it always provides something new or different for us to be inspired by.’ **25**



**GUEST EN SUITE**  
Simple decor enlarges this small area.  
Oyster mosaic tiles, £199sq m, Fired Earth



**MATILDA'S BEDROOM**  
A pink scheme gives a girly feel.  
Jules quilt, £80, Feather & Black



**BEDROOM**  
Blue hues feature throughout, linking each space together.  
Try Sellingantiques.co.uk for a chaise longue like this one, from £1,110

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**TERRACE**

'We love this shaded spot for lunches and informal entertaining,' says Chrislien. Roscana teak six-seater dining set, £532, B&Q, would work here. Belfast light in Coffee Bean, £75, Garden Trading, is similar

**BREAKFAST AREA**

Painted furniture creates a homely feel. Neptune Chichester dresser, £1,850, John Lewis, is a match. Provençal stripe chair, £295, The French Bedroom Company, is comparable



# FAMILY FAVOURITE

*As soon as Chrislien and Craig Bath saw the potential of this run-down farmhouse, there was no turning back*

**KITCHEN**

**A vintage table not only anchors this area, but serves as a rustic island.**

For distressed cabinetry try Unfitted, £763 for a 500mm base cabinet. Industrial enamel pendant lampshade, £78, Anton & K, is an alternative. Dunelm is a good place to source wicker baskets, from £2 each

**DESIGN TIP**

*'Listen to your instincts and trust your own style – if you invest in things you love, then they'll never go out of fashion'*

**UNIQUE****HOME TRUTHS****THE PROPERTY**

Detached farmhouse

**LOCATION**

Western Cape, South Africa

**ROOMS** Sitting room/kitchen, dining room, family room, study, utility room, three bedrooms, two bathrooms

**PURCHASED** 2013**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**

'Before we bought this place, we lived in a similar-style house just a few streets away,' says Chrislien.



### SITTING ROOM

**This airy, open-plan space is ideal for the family to unwind and spend quality time together.**  
Chesterfield sofa, £1,499, SofaSofa, is near-identical. Polished concrete flooring, from £20sq m, Skim Coat. Walls painted in Strong White modern emulsion, £42 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball

If someone had told us five years ago we would move to this house, I'd have laughed,' says Chrislien Bath of the cottage where she and her husband Craig now live. 'It was a sad building with a 1970s brick-faced frontage and an awkward, cramped interior.' The property, nestling at the foot of the Helderberg mountain in South Africa, had been on the market for more than a year and was a stone's throw from the couple's previous home, which they had sold in the hope of finding a renovation project.

'We'd driven past the place a few times and could see it had potential, but it was beyond our budget,' says Chrislien. 'However,

the asking price kept falling, and finally, it was within our reach.' Having built several houses from scratch, the couple were well prepared for the task in hand. They started by stripping out the rabbit warren of rooms to create a free-flowing space, restoring the exterior with white render and natural rock, and adding an extension that more than doubled the footprint.

The couple and their two daughters, Robyn, 12, and Nina, 9, lived on-site during the remodel – installing a kitchen and bathroom, and sleeping in one of the bedrooms while work took place around them. 'The tenancy on our rental home had expired, so we had

### STUDY

**'I love this desk as it's big enough for more than one person,' says Chrislien.**  
Pierre Henry cabinet is similar, £47, Tesco.  
Facile stool, £17, Wayfair, is a match.



### FAMILY ROOM

**A large fireplace is a bold focal point.**  
Lamp Black intelligent matt emulsion is comparable to the wall colour, £43.50 for 2.5 litres, Little Greene



### DINING ROOM

**By adding a rustic bench, this elegant area feels relaxing and inviting.**  
Henry three-seater bench in oak suits this style, £299, John Lewis



**NINA'S BEDROOM**

'For the decor, I cut out circles and pasted them to the wall,' says Chrislien. Anastasia single quilt, £165, The White Company, has a similar patchwork style

**BATHROOM**

**Simply styled with a freestanding bath and chandelier, this has a pared-back look.**  
London freestanding bath, £599, Bathstore

**MASTER BEDROOM**

**Glamorous chandeliers look elegant in this otherwise pared-back scheme.**  
Shamley 12-light chandelier, £500; Clifton ivory wardrobe, £1,650, both Laura Ashley, are much the same



**LAST WORD** 'We feel very proud of what we've achieved and it's been worth the hard work – the house is everything we envisaged and more'

no choice,' explains Chrislien. 'It was dusty, noisy and incredibly hectic, but the final result makes it all worthwhile.'

Once the building work was complete, Chrislien couldn't wait to start redecorating. Painted antique furniture, weatherbeaten shutters and linen upholstery create an air of faded elegance that was inspired by Chrislien's love of French decor. 'I've always adored the laid-back style of rural Provence,' she says. Family heirlooms, such as the balloon-backed dining chairs, sit alongside vintage finds, including an old church cabinet and a chesterfield sofa. 'I've collected all kinds of different pieces over the years and I'm always on the lookout for more at flea markets and in junk shops,' she says.

In the kitchen, which was crafted by a local joiner from reclaimed Oregon wood, there is a relaxed feel. Cabinetry is painted in chalk

white and dove grey and paired with a whitewashed armoire and timeworn table. Wooden worktops, wicker baskets and enamel pendants make for a lived-in look, and homespun bunting is a nod to a bygone age. Throughout the house, the Baths made the bold decision to install polished concrete floors, from the open-plan ground level to the more intimate bedrooms, which are also furnished with French antiques painted in muted shades. 'The neutral tone goes with everything and it retains heat in all seasons,' says Chrislien.

As the weather warms in the autumn the outdoor space comes into its own, with its terrace that leads from the snug to the gardens and a pool. 'We open the doors and barbecue on the step with all our family and friends,' says Chrislien. 'We had a vision of what the house could be, but reality has surpassed all expectations.'

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## INSPIRING



## HOME TRUTHS

## THE PROPERTY

Edwardian terraced house

## LOCATION

Southwest London

## ROOMS

Hall, sitting room/kitchen-diner, two

bedrooms, bathroom

## PURCHASED

2012

## PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before we moved here, we lived two streets away in a Victorian conversion flat,' says Veronica.



**LIFE  
THROUGH A  
LENS**

*Using her natural eye for colour and detail, photographer Veronica Rodriguez turned a run-down apartment into a chic modern home*

**FEATURE ALIX O'NEILL | PHOTOGRAPHY VERONICA RODRIGUEZ**

**DINING AREA**  
Many items of furniture are antique or secondhand buys that have been upcycled with a fresh coat of paint. OH vintage boro table, £2,220, Houseology, is a good match. Find Eames-style chairs, from £55 each, Atlantic Shopping. Starkey chandelier, £149, Made

**SITTING ROOM**

'Some of my books are really heavy, so we used scaffolding boards secured with steel brackets for the shelves,' says Veronica.

For a similar armchair fabric try Eglinton by Nina Campbell, £129.99m, Osborne & Little. Bent glass coffee table, £180, Class Glass, is comparable



**FAVOURITE ROOM** *'The sitting room is where we spend the majority of our time – it's such a generous space that's filled with natural light'*



1



2



3



When Veronica Rodriguez was looking for a new home, plenty of space was her main requisite. She was living in a small flat with her husband Darren Jones and craved two things – a garden and a dressing table. ‘We had no room for a vanity area, and I had to dry my hair standing up,’ she said. ‘Having long hair meant I spent a lot of time on my feet!'

The couple loved where they lived in leafy southwest London, but finding a property within their budget wasn't easy. After searching further afield with no luck, they were running out of ideas, until a two-bedroom terrace around the corner came on the market. ‘We jumped at the chance to buy it,’ says Veronica, ‘although it did need a lot of repair.’

Unfazed by the work involved, they immediately set about replacing the boiler, replastering the entire house and painting all the woodwork. A wall separating the kitchen from the sitting room/dining area was removed to create a large open-plan space that led outdoors. Some dubious hi-gloss pink floor tiles in the kitchen were also replaced with smart wooden flooring. ‘Those tiles were quite something,’ recalls Veronica. ‘Thankfully, the original boards had been bought locally, so replacing them was simple.’

As both Veronica and Darren are photographers, they have a trained eye for composition and colour, and Veronica was keen to recreate the

## I & 2 KITCHEN-DINER

**‘The units had recently been fitted, so all I did was paint them a more modern shade,’ says Veronica.**

For a similar cabinet colour try Vert De Terre estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Artois metal mirror, £130, Maisons du Monde, would work well here. Broadway star light, £139, Made, is an alternative

**3 HALL**  
To make this space feel lighter, the couple removed the carpet from the mahogany stairs, reinstalled the spindles and banister, and painted everything white. Maroque is a good place to source Moroccan-style mirrors like this one, from £54. Junction pendant, from £17, Heal's



4

## 4 MASTER BEDROOM

**Luxurious accessories add a cosy feel.** Birlea Bronte bedstead, £190, Furniture123, has this look. Round Venetian mirror, £99, Sweetpea & Willow, suits this style

## 5 GUEST BEDROOM

**As this space is only occasionally used, a corner has been converted into a study.** Lotherton mirror, £325, The Chandelier & Mirror Company, is comparable

## 6 BATHROOM

**‘This was a challenge as it was in poor shape, but we got there,’ says Veronica.** Ferndale Sage Green 600 unit and ceramic basin top, £549, Bathstore



5

contemporary look of their previous flat. ‘I had a colour scheme in mind, so I knew we had to strip it all back and start again with a clean canvas,’ she says. ‘At first, we painted everything white, then started introducing other colours on the walls. We wanted it to be light and airy, with a few muted shades, such as grey and sage green, to give that crisp, modern look.’

For inspiration on accessories, Veronica turned to magazines – the self-confessed homewares addict keeps neat piles of interiors publications around the house. ‘I love looking at other people’s houses and it’s where I get most of my ideas,’ she explains.

You can see that her obsession with home styling has paid off when you look around their interior, which artfully combines a variety of styles. Louis chairs and elegant consoles with cabriole legs sit happily alongside contemporary exposed lighting and Oriental art in vivid tones. Splashes of turquoise make an attractive addition, and there’s the occasional touch of glamour, too – with an ornate gold gilt mirror here, and a chandelier spray-painted copper there.

It’s taken three years to complete the project, but the pleasure Veronica and Darren get from their home is evident. ‘It’s a house for all seasons,’ she explains. ‘In summer, we’ll have coffee on the decking outside, and in winter, we’ll share a bottle of red wine in front of the woodburning stove in the sitting room. With an interiors magazine by my side, of course.’ **25**



6

# HIGH POINT

Charlotte Hamel has used antique family pieces, flea-market finds and contemporary chic to add a touch of *je ne sais quoi* to a Dublin apartment

FEATURE MANDI MILLAR | PHOTOGRAPHY ASHLEY MORRISON





## NEW-BUILD



### HOME TRUTHS

#### THE PROPERTY

Modern apartment

#### LOCATION

Dublin

#### ROOMS

Sitting room, dining area, kitchen, two bedrooms (one en suite), two bathrooms

#### PURCHASED

2013

#### PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before moving here I had a flat

in Paris,' says Charlotte.

#### LIVING AREA

'Wherever I travel, I take my Eiffel Tower window transfer with me,' says French-born Charlotte. Eiffel Tower window decal sticker, £20, AllPosters.co.uk, is similar. Custom-made sofa, £1,420, Jaybee Sofaworks. Vintage coffee table, £213, Hier Pour Demain



Charlotte Hamel's career in marketing has taken her around the world – but for all that, she doesn't believe in travelling light. Wherever Charlotte goes, her furniture goes, too. 'Ironically it's probably my furniture that has dictated the houses I've lived in,' she admits. 'As the years have gone by, I've gathered up more and more from the places I've visited, so each time I move on, it all has to be accommodated.'

However, relocating to Dublin two years ago was not as straightforward as Charlotte had hoped – because of work commitments, she didn't have the luxury of being able to house-hunt for herself. 'I had to rely on a good friend who knew the sort of place I was after,' she says. 'Top of my list of must-haves was somewhere with lots of light – you can make most homes work when you have bright rooms. I also told him a balcony would be the icing on the cake.'

Charlotte's diligent friend came up trumps and sent her a video he had taken of a bright new-build located on a bustling dockside. 'He said this was definitely the one for me and I trusted his judgement,' says Charlotte. 'The huge

#### I KITCHEN

'The flush-finish unit doors maximise the sense of space in the relatively small kitchen,' says Charlotte.

Metod units, from £71 for a base cabinet with shelves, Ikea, would work well here. Try JLHDA915 chimney cooker hood, £449, John Lewis, for a similar look. Browse for comparable vintage tins, from £6, at Cake Storage Tins



I

windows have some of the best views in Dublin, while the balcony is a definite bonus for a city-centre apartment. This area has a real buzz about it, plus a strong sense of community – and that means a lot when you're new to a place, as I am.'

However, Charlotte's hectic lifestyle meant there was little time for decorating. 'The walls were already a soft grey and I decided to leave them like that because they worked well as a backdrop,' she says. 'Luckily, most of my furniture fitted in without too much trouble, except the sofa. I'd had it made to order but when it was delivered it wouldn't fit into the lift – it was two centimetres too high – and the stairs were too narrow. There was nothing to be done but to cut it in two and then put it back together again in the apartment. Thankfully you can't see the join!'

When it comes to the style of Charlotte's apartment, predictably her friends describe it as having a 'French

#### 1 HALL

'The wall storage unit beside the stairs is intended for wine, but it's much more suited to housing my shoes!' says Charlotte.

For a similar red seat try the Charles Eames Style DAW Chair in Plastic, £50, Vita Interiors

**DESIGN ADVICE** 'Use a different type of flooring to divide up open-plan spaces, for example, wood in the dining zone and tiles in the kitchen area'

#### DINING AREA

A wall of mirrors doubles the sense of space in the apartment and reflects light beautifully.

For custom-made wall mirrors, try Mirrorfit.co.uk. The Hay chair, £130, Industry, is a good match



### BEDROOM

Charlotte loves the floor-to-ceiling window but uses an antique folding screen to give her more privacy without sacrificing light.

Try the Bugle shade, £45, The Lighting Company, for a similar pendant. The Tartan Blanket Co. has a good range of similar throws, from £27



feel'. 'They're probably right, although I don't set out to be "French", she says. 'I love antiques and bric-à-brac and I'm never happier than when I'm having a morning to myself in a flea market. I love artwork, too. Whenever I visit a festival, for instance, or go on holiday, I'll always buy a poster or picture of the event or the place, so the pieces on my walls evoke good memories, which is important when you're living away from home.'

However, now she has had a chance to put down roots in Ireland – for the time being anyway – is there anything she would like to change about her apartment? 'Well, I certainly wouldn't change my sofa, or the "analysis couch", as my friends call it!' says Charlotte. 'Although I had such a job fitting it in, it's become the heart of my home where my friends and I can sit for hours listening to jazz, sipping whisky and solving the world's problems, while enjoying the fantastic view over Dublin's skyline!' 25

### 2 BATHROOM

Charlotte loves the hotel-style luxury of her bathroom. 'It's also practical, which is perfect for my busy lifestyle,' she says.

Take a look at the Bitonto basin, £159, Clickbasin.co.uk.

Grundtal mirror, £20, Ikea, is a match



# CREATURE COMFORTS

Lesley Bailie used colour, texture and salvaged finds to turn a new-build bungalow into a country home for family – and furry friends

FEATURE MANDI MILLAR | PHOTOGRAPHY ASHLEY MORRISON

## SITTING ROOM

Rich creams and cranberry hues make this a cosy, relaxing space.

For a similar velvet sofa try the Hertford large two-seater in Caitlyn Cranberry, from £1,400, Laura Ashley. Mirrored dresser, £60, Gumtree, painted in Country Grey chalk paint, £18.95 for 1 litre, Annie Sloan. Walls painted in Dorset Cream estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



**NEW-BUILD****HOME TRUTHS****THE PROPERTY**

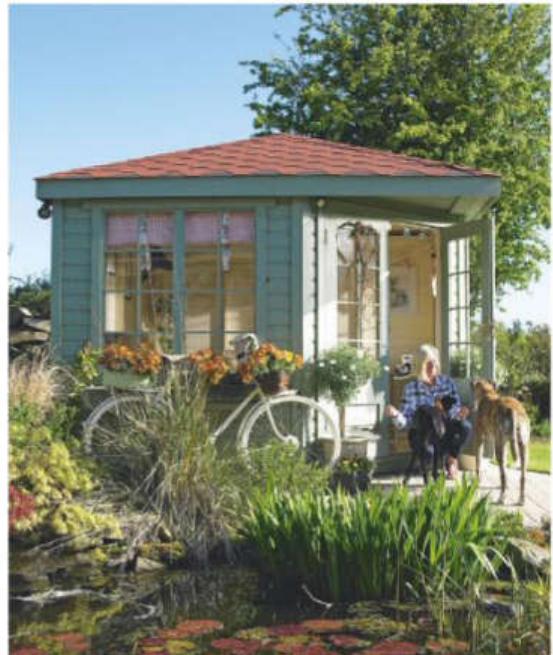
Bungalow, built in 2006

**LOCATION** County Down

**ROOMS** Sitting room, sunroom, kitchen-diner, four bedrooms (one en suite), bathroom, summer house

**PURCHASED** 2006**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**

'We lived in a new development in the nearby market town of Newtownards before we moved here,' explains Lesley.



**H**aving grown up on a farm, Lesley Bailie felt a long way from home in the new development she and husband Lindsay were living in. 'The house was great and the area was fine but I longed to be back in the countryside – not least so we had room for our ever-growing family of rescue animals!' says Lesley. 'We were scouring property websites and came across this half-acre site with plans already approved for a four-bedroom home. Of course, when we first viewed the place, it was just a site – but it was perfect. The plans showed it had lots of space inside, a south-facing garden and it offered privacy.'

As Lesley is involved in dog rescue work, she also wanted space to be able to foster dogs from time to time, and this spot offered that – and more. 'There wasn't one thing we wanted to change with the plan,'

**SUMMER HOUSE**

'We love this outdoor room – it's a relaxing space where you can get away from it all,' says Lesley.

Mortimer sofa, £1,500, Laura Ashley. For similar moose heads see the Wooden 3D Puzzle, £56, Etsy



says Lesley. 'In fact, the spacious sunroom and extra-large bathroom were the icing on the cake. Plus, as we knew the builder had an excellent reputation, we were more than happy to sign on the dotted line.'

Luckily, the couple were able to time the sale of their previous home so they did not have to rent other accommodation during the eight-month renovation. Their builder was project-managing the new house, but Lesley was also able to visit and keep a close eye on its progress. However, not everything went to plan.

'There were a few hiccups along the way,' reveals Lesley, 'not least when I arrived one day to view my beautiful Belfast sink from France in situ in the kitchen. But when I went hunting for the Italian taps we'd bought to complete the look, I found them charred and buckled in the middle of

**DESIGN ADVICE** 'Don't be tempted to make changes for change's sake. We bought our home off-plan and didn't transform a thing – it worked perfectly for us as it was'

a fire the builders had made to burn the packaging. Thankfully, they ensured they were replaced.'

With the build complete, Lesley set about creating her dream home in the country. 'I've always been interested in interiors – Lindsay might say I was obsessed,' she says. 'I've kept a scrapbook of ideas – fabric scraps, pictures I like and so on. I've even done courses in interior design, creative painting and lighting, so this was the ideal opportunity to try it out.'

Lesley wanted a cosy traditional look in keeping with the beautiful rural setting. 'Creating that look in a new-build property might seem a contradiction, but I really enjoyed visiting salvage yards for items to give our home that homely lived-in feel,' she explains. 'One great find was a beautiful antique sideboard that was languishing in a barn beside an ancient tractor. The inglenook fireplace in the sunroom is built from salvaged bricks and some of them even have little thistle motifs on them. That's the sort of detail I love when I find reclaimed items.'

When she's not busy tending their half-acre of land, Lesley is finally able to sit back and enjoy her country retreat. 'My favourite place is the sunroom. I love how the windows run right around the space so I can enjoy our garden. It's also the brightest room in the house, and when we light the fire on cooler evenings, it's a lovely place to unwind.'

#### GUEST BEDROOM

**The tranquil green scheme reflects the pastoral scene outside.**  
Antique sofa seat re-covered in Voyage Isla Heather, £19.50m, Textile Express.  
Sanderson Varese wallpaper, £46 per roll, Wallpaper Direct, is like this



#### BATHROOM

**Lesley added a sofa in her large bathroom to give it a boudoir feel.**  
For a bath like this see the Salcombe, £995, Cast Iron Bath Company. The Claude sofa, £680, Sofa.com, is comparable. Basin dresser from an antiques shop



# Insight

## CREATING YOUR OWN GARDEN ROOM

**Why not give your home a bright new look by building a glazed extension as Lesley Bailie has?**

**B**uilding an extra room with a view of the garden is a growing trend. With the current vogue for open-plan, multipurpose family rooms that combine a mix of kitchen, dining and living spaces, garden rooms and orangeries fit the bill perfectly.

### Room for all seasons

A garden room is a glazed extension with a fully tiled roof, and an orangery has a part-tiled roof with inset glass panels. Garden rooms can either be freestanding, like the Bailies', or attached to an existing building. 'More people now choose a garden room or orangery rather than a conservatory, because their solid roof construction makes them suitable for year-round living,' explains David Salisbury of David Salisbury Joinery. Think about how you'd like to use the space. It can be an extra sitting room, a spot to enjoy your garden, or a home office. Alternatively, it can be your main family room, or a space for entertaining. 'With its full-length windows, an orangery has a more formal feel than a fully-glazed conservatory, and

is the most popular choice for kitchen and dining room extensions,' says David. A wide choice of building materials is available – painted hardwood is popular, while a green oak-framed construction creates a rustic look. To avoid planning delays, the build must blend with your house and have similar windows.

### Bring the outside in

Before designing the decor, consider the look of your garden and the surrounding landscape. Is it cottage-style or formal? Incorporating the strongest themes and shapes in your garden through colour, pattern or line is a good starting point for planning a garden-room scheme. For a more relaxed look, use metal or wrought iron garden furniture and natural stone flooring, such as limestone flagstones or slate. Conventional, upholstered furniture and wooden floorboards will create a more formal feel. As a general rule, use lighter or medium-toned colours. For maximum access, install folding or sliding doors that open out and lead straight into the garden – perfect for sunny days.



Floor-to-ceiling glazing creates a scheme full of light



A standalone garden room makes an ideal study



Keep furnishing neutral to let the view really shine

**EXPERT EYE** 'Always decorate a garden room in keeping with its aspect and the direction it faces. A warm-toned scheme in a north-facing design will lift your spirits, even on the dullest autumn day'

SUZANNE PETERSON, SUZANNE PETERSON INTERIOR DESIGN



### PROFESSIONAL ADVICE



'Decide what the look of your garden room will be, and plan your palette accordingly. Use cool green, blue, cream and lilac tones to evoke the classic feel of an English country garden. Rich reds, yellows, ochres and oranges will add warmth, drama and a hint of Mediterranean style.'

**Don't limit yourself to cane, wicker or rattan sofas and chairs. Matching the garden-room furniture to that of your main living areas will integrate the space with the rest of your home, whether your room is freestanding or an extension.**

Take care when choosing your upholstery fabrics. Deeper colours and silks will tend to fade in strong sunlight, whereas light and mid-toned linens are a more practical choice. Several companies now make fade-resistant outdoor fabrics that also work well in garden rooms, such as Fox Linton's Outdoor range, the Tiana range at Designers Guild, and Osborne & Little's Zancudo collection

**Choosing the right blinds is essential. Pinoleum roof blinds filter out around 70 per cent of sunlight, and provide invaluable shade. Marston Langinger has an extensive range of pinoleum blinds, which can be painted to tone in with your existing scheme.'**

**LOUISA WYATT, THE MEWS INTERIOR DESIGN COMPANY**

### ADDRESS BOOK

**David Salisbury 01278 764444,  
davidsalisbury.com**  
**Westbury Garden Rooms 01245 326500,  
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INSPIRING



HOME TRUTHS

**THE PROPERTY**

Semi-detached Victorian cottage

**LOCATION**

Southwest London

**ROOMS** Sitting room, kitchen-diner, family room, three bedrooms (one en suite), bathroom, garden room

**PURCHASED** 2007

**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**  
'We lived in a New York tower block before this,' says Natalie.

# CENTRE STAGE

An unusual piece of artwork that had been in the family for years influenced Natalie and Tom Routledge's plan for their new extension

FEATURE RACHEL LEEDHAM | PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH



## SITTING ROOM

Natalie chose a cream woodburner as she felt that a black one would be too dark. Sundial mirror, £495, Mirrorman. Beaumont stove, from £1,074, Chesney's. Chimney breast painted in Leafy Cottage flat matt emulsion, £24.49 for 2.5 litres, Dulux



## GARDEN ROOM

This structure serves as an office and a play room. Bespoke outdoor room, price on application, Eden Garden Rooms. Bistro furniture, £50, Homebase



## DINING AREA

'We inherited this sofa from Tom's grandmother and it works so well alongside our favourite poster,' says Natalie. Berlin sofa in Lagoon Clever velvet, £995, Loaf. Baron table, £1,702, Calligaris, is comparable. Tam Tam white stool, £15, Habitat



#### KITCHEN

The Shaker-style units were painted in a shade that helps pull the garden indoors.

Bespoke Tewkesbury cabinets, Howdens; painted in Green Blue estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball

**STUDY**  
In this space, a cupboard was transformed into a small office. Eames DSR white chair, £226, The Conran Shop

**I**t's not often that a wall poster dictates the architecture of a new extension, but that's exactly what happened when Natalie and Tom Routledge decided to add a kitchen-cum-dining room to their Victorian cottage. 'Our architect wanted a window in the side wall but I put my foot down,' says Natalie. 'I knew that my poster of a goldfish would look perfect there instead.' And she has a point – the enormous vintage artwork, found by Natalie's father in a dusty shop in southwest France, looks as if it was made to preside over their dining table. 'My parents had it in their house originally, but it came to us when they downsized.'

As well as influencing the architecture, the poster has also guided the palette of watery blue-greens that appear in the kitchen, sitting room and master bedroom. 'I don't think we realised how much we loved those colours until we got the poster,' says Natalie. 'They're very uplifting.'

The Routledges, who have two sons, Jake, 12, and Sam, 9, moved to southwest London eight years ago. They chose this area for its family-oriented open spaces and good transport links. Gradually, they have adapted the house to suit the needs of their growing family, starting with the kitchen extension. 'The dining room used to be in the sitting room and the kitchen was a small space at the end of the property, so we extended sideways and into the garden,' says Natalie. 'As we love to cook and eat, it's become the room we use the most.'

Two years later, the couple focused on the first floor level, which had an odd configuration whereby the third bedroom could only be accessed through the second bedroom, and the bathroom was reached via the master bedroom. A more logical layout was created that ensured privacy for everyone, and they even built an en suite.

'The final phase was the addition of a garden room, which would provide the boys with a space where they could spend time with friends,' says Natalie, who also needed a larger office. The new structure includes a TV area, study and table football. 'The kids use it all the time – it compensates for their small bedrooms.'

A mix of Mid-Century pieces, Scandinavian designs and items picked up on the couple's travels adorn the interior. There are also more vintage posters around the house. 'I think it stems from the fact that my dad was a graphic designer, so I grew up with a lot of graphic art,' says Natalie. Many of the pieces have personal significance, such as an amethyst-coloured bottle next to the fireplace. 'Tom's grandmother was a pharmacist and this used to be on display in her chemist,' says Natalie. 'The stopper is a bit chipped but we quite like that about it. A home should have a few bumps and scrapes – it shows that it's lived in.'

#### FAVOURITE ROOM

*'We spend a huge amount of time in the new kitchen-diner. It's a great place where all the family can socialise and be together'*



#### MASTER BEDROOM

Striped fabric that the couple found in a shop in Suffolk was the inspiration for this space.

IF24 curtain fabric, £38m, Southsea Deckchairs, is near-identical



#### SAM'S ROOM

A raised bed with built-in storage and a desk makes this small area multifunctional.

Mayfair white mid-sleeper bed, £397, Sleepland Beds. Terje chair, £11, Ikea



#### BATHROOM

The trim of blue-green tiles echoes the colour scheme in the rest of the house.

Retro Metro trim in Lido Blue, £1.67 each; Retro Metro tiles in Swiss Cottage, £74.98m sq. both Fired Earth



# TWO BECOME ONE

*Eugenie Nixon and her husband Guy cleverly linked both their flats to create one spacious family home*

FEATURE KATIE TREGGIDEN  
PHOTOGRAPHY BRUCE HEMMING



## REPLANNED



## HOME TRUTHS

## THE PROPERTY

Two-storey Victorian apartment

## LOCATION West London

## ROOMS Sitting room,

kitchen-diner, utility room, three

bedrooms, bathroom, shower room

## PURCHASED 2005

## PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before I moved here, I had a place  
in Notting Hill,' says Eugenie.

## KITCHEN-DINER

A marble fireplace and velvet armchair along with streamlined cabinets give this room a relaxed look. Walls painted in Paint Library Slate II flat emulsion, £37.50 for 2.5 litres, Paint & Paper. Cornicing, from £80m, Hayles & Howe. Units, from £300, Mowlem & Co; sprayed in Mole's Breath estate eggshell, from £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



#### SITTING ROOM

The new state-of-the-art staircase contrasts with the traditional style of the property. The bespoke oak staircase was built by Smet. For a similar sofa, try the Minster, £5,698, George Smith

**FAVOURITE FEATURE** *'I love the cornicing. It's exactly as it would have been originally, and we painted it a slightly different colour to the walls to really highlight it'*

Eugenie Nixon and her husband Guy lived across two apartments before joining them into the family home of their dreams. Eugenie was living in her own place when she became pregnant with their first child. As soon as she heard the flat above Guy's in west London was on the market, she snapped it up. For 10 years, the couple and their growing family – they now have two boys, Stanley, 7, and Rex, 4, plus Guy's two older sons, Orlando, 18, and Sholto, 16 – resided in both flats, with the living rooms in one and their bedrooms in the other. They moved between the two via a communal staircase. 'The neighbours didn't mind,' says Eugenie. 'They got quite used to seeing us come and go in our pyjamas.'

Then the couple decided to turn the two residences into one. The main job was finding a way to connect them, and architect Stephen Fletcher came up with the idea of having a modern staircase going through the middle of both properties. 'The biggest challenge was making sure the staircase didn't destroy the rooms downstairs,' explains Eugenie. 'We wanted it to take up as little space as possible.'

Another contemporary addition was the minimalist kitchen on the ground floor. 'I was after a room that didn't look too kitcheny – I wanted it to "disappear",' says Eugenie. 'At first, Guy didn't like the sound of it, but when he realised how clean and simple it was

going to be, he changed his mind.' For the other rooms, the couple were keen to keep to the style of the property. 'We planned to respect its Victorian roots,' says Eugenie. Unfortunately, the previous owners had removed a lot of the original features. 'They stripped out the cornicing, and there was a hideous concrete fireplace,' she says. So Eugenie had bespoke fireplaces made and cornicing put in from a Victorian mould. 'One thing that was perfectly intact were the original tiles outside covering the steps leading up to the front door,' says Eugenie. 'All we had to do was give them a polish.'

A trip to France proved to be pivotal in finding key pieces of furniture to complete the look. 'I had an old farmhouse kitchen table, but Guy was hankering after an Eero Saarinen Tulip table, so the jury was out,' explains Eugenie. 'Then we went to a flea market in Paris and saw this 1950s Italian marble table. I thought the price tag said €9,000, but it was actually €1,200, so we bought it!' It's paired with sturdy Tolix chairs because the couple wanted something robust for the boys. They also bought some lamps on the same trip. 'We were only there for a short time, but came back with a lot,' she says.

The thing Eugenie loves most about her finished home is its sense of calm. 'The pared-back look and muted colour scheme make it a real retreat,' she says. 'It's somewhere we can relax and just be ourselves.'

**MASTER BEDROOM**

Vintage furniture set against a dramatic wall colour creates a grand setting in here. Clifton chest of drawers, £800, Laura Ashley. For a similar chair try Versailles Mummy Gold, £459, The French Bedroom Company. Walls painted in London Clay estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Dobby stripe double duvet set, £240, House of Fraser, is a match

**BATHROOM**

Marble brings a touch of luxury to the period features. Marble, £4,500, The Marble & Granite Centre. Lefroy Brooks Classic undercounter oval basin, £370; Lefroy Brooks Connaught deck-mounted bath shower mixer, £677, both Just Lefroy. Towels, from £2 each, John Lewis

**STANLEY &****ORLANDO'S BEDROOM**

Built-in shelves are a great space-saving option for compact rooms. For similar shelves try Lack, from £5, Ikea

## INSPIRING



## HOME TRUTHS

**THE PROPERTY**

19th-century watermill

**LOCATION** Loire Valley,  
France**ROOMS** Sitting room,  
kitchen, scullery, dining area,  
five bedrooms (all en suite)**PURCHASED** 1991**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**  
'Before moving here, I lived in  
apartments in Paris and then  
Angers,' says Jonathan.BEST OF BOTH  
WORLDS



#### DINING AREA

The giant iron pit-wheel looms up from behind a limestone wall and dominates part of the room. For a similar French-style pendant try the Coolicon industrial light, £60, Artifact Lighting. Buff rattan basket, from £10, The Basket Company, has this look



#### SITTING ROOM

Original earthenware floor tiles provide rustic charm teamed with a cosy leather armchair. Norfolk Pamment seconds tiles, £37sq m, Pamments.co.uk, are comparable. Monpaz chair, £795, Alexander & Pearl, is a match



#### KITCHEN

This airy glass-house extension features a 1930s 'cold cupboard'. The Smeg stainless steel range cooker, SUK81MFX8, £858, Next Domestic Appliances, is a good alternative. Wedgwood soup tureen, £165, Amara, is near-identical

Jonathan Robinson turned a dilapidated old watermill into a hidden sanctuary that houses a living and working space untouched by time

FEATURE GREG COOK | PHOTOGRAPHY RICHARD PARSONS

Tucked away in the southwestern edge of the Loire Valley lies a lovingly restored watermill owned by Jonathan Robinson. The fine artist, who has taught painting both at The Art Institute of San Francisco and the Parsons School of Design in Paris, describes himself as 'an aesthetic refugee' who recently fled the city in pursuit of a more authentic way of life.

So when Jonathan finally decided to escape the rat race, he not only retreated deep into regional France but also into a world that seemed unscathed by modern-day life. The

adjoining village, with its 12th-century church, harbours around 100 residents in old stone buildings; while the mill itself, dating from the 19th century, is one of the area's more contemporary structures.

When Jonathan arrived in 1991, it appeared that little had changed for centuries, although the three-storey building that had once ground all the flour for the town's bread had long ceased to fulfil its purpose.

The mill wheel sat somewhere downstream of the structure and the 20-acre plot was home to one elderly gentleman and his free-roaming herd of goats. 'I realised I'd found a space



## MASTER BEDROOM

**This spacious salon-style area with authentic beams features a king-size bed, covered with a luxe silk quilt.**  
For a similar Louis XV-style armchair try Villeneuve Oak French style sofa chair, £710, Crown French Furniture. Add a touch of decadence with a close-match Taupe Silk bedspread, £280, Jasmine Silk

## EN-SUITE BATHROOM

**The antique double-basin centrepiece is set into Carrara marble in a mahogany frame.**  
For patterned and coloured encaustic floor tiles like these, look at Origin 072, £255m sq, Robel



## GUEST BEDROOM

**The mahogany bed dressed in rich colours takes centre stage among vintage accessories.**  
Try Cello vintage leather club chair, £990, Old Boot



that could become both my home and my art studio,' says Jonathan, 'and although the degree of dilapidation was daunting, I relished the opportunity to breathe life back into this property.'

Jonathan bought the mill and a small building and set to work turning both structures into a live-and-work space designed to respect the building's roots. His ethos was to live within the property and adapt his way of life to it.

So began a meticulous restoration that spanned two decades, as Jonathan replaced fixtures and fittings like-for-like, either waiting patiently until he found period pieces,

or saving to afford the work of local artisans and craftsmen.

Now, visitors marvel at the wrought-iron machinery, the sturdy timber beams, repaired oak staircases and tile floors, not to mention Jonathan's authentic furnishings. A log fire takes the chill off autumn days, and throughout the house there are homely touches including artwork, rustic antique furniture and vibrant textiles. 'This was just a simple industrial building, but the craftsmen who helped build it clearly had an eye for detail,' says Jonathan. 'Each added little pleasures for the eye. It's been wonderful to participate in that culture of beauty.'

**FAVOURITE ROOM** 'I'm very fond of the master bedroom, it has lots of space – an ideal balance between luxurious period furnishings and the original mill machinery'

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### DINING ROOM

Susan's favourite room combines the mood of a formal Victorian space with lighter, contemporary touches. Egyptian Cotton matt emulsion, £21.29 for 2.5 litres, Dulux, is a match for the wall paint, while the art is displayed in Ikea frames



### INSPIRING



### HOME TRUTHS

**THE PROPERTY** Victorian semi-detached

**LOCATION** Dublin

**ROOMS** Hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, four bedrooms (one en suite), bathroom, shower room

**PURCHASED** 2010

**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**

'We had a two-bedroom terraced redbrick in Dublin's Phibsborough,' says Susan.



# TALE OF

Susan and Tim Doyle were not

**FEATURE & PHOTOGRAPHY**  
BARBARA EGAN/REPORTAGE

## KITCHEN

'I wanted to make this a bright and relaxed family room that's inviting and cosy at any time of year,' says Susan. Shaker-style kitchen with solid cherry worktop, price on application, In-House at The Panelling Centre. Oisin Waterford Stanley solid-fuel stove, £335, Joyce Stove Shop. Sofa, £510, Karl's Furniture. Vintage poster/clock, £25, Dublin Flea Market. Malaro red chairs, £25 each; PS 2014 bench, £50, both Ikea



# THE UNEXPECTED

looking for a new home, until this Victorian semi took them by surprise



## DESIGN TIP *'The orientation of the house is east to west and gets no south light, so I*

### SITTING ROOM

**'I love the unusual circular hearth and took it as inspiration for my burgundy accessories,' says Susan.**  
Karlstad sofa, £279; Vittsjo coffee table, £35, both Ikea. Wall painted in Pavilion Gray estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. The overmantel was bought at Oxfam for £25



This Victorian semi-detached home in a leafy Dublin suburb looks tiny from the front, but opens up unexpectedly inside. 'There are lots of these houses in what would have been the outskirts of the city in the 1880s,' says owner Susan Doyle. 'They look minuscule from the outside, but have two storeys to the rear.' At the front are high-ceilinged reception rooms, with more modest spaces at the back. 'My aunt lived in a similar house and I always thought it was wonderful,' Susan says.

Susan, who works in a restaurant, wasn't looking for a new home when she spotted the For Sale sign: 'I was really just being nosy arranging a viewing.' Once inside, however, she was smitten. 'Tim was initially a bit startled as everything was rushed,' says Susan, 'but he liked the house, too.'

On the plus side, it was well cared for with many period features intact but on the down side, the floors on the first level were in poor condition and the kitchen and bathroom



were dated. 'It would have been lovely to pour money into the house, but we didn't have very much to pour!' says Susan. 'So Tim and I sat down and made a list of the main items to tackle: new floors at ground level and a new kitchen. We also decided on solid-fuel stoves for the sitting room and kitchen, as they would pay for themselves in time.'

The essential work having used up most of their money, it was up to Susan to furnish and decorate on a budget. 'We had a few pieces of furniture from our previous house, but not all of it was suitable. I started by looking in second-hand shops, markets and auction rooms, and then online, and soon realised that second-hand furniture is often excellent quality and good value.'

The kitchen is long and narrow, but lends itself to Susan's idea of making it a relaxing area for the family, including Caoimhe, 16, and Declan, 10, with a sofa and stove at one end. 'It's a lovely place to sit: sunny in summer and warm and inviting in the winter,' says Susan. 'The family can be here while I'm cooking and I can read in peace if they're watching TV in the sitting room.'

Now the house is done, she occasionally lets it for short stays. 'It's an inventive way for it to pay for itself,' Susan says. 'But we're never away for long – we miss it too much.'





*'decided to use warm neutral paints and striking colours to make it more inviting'*



# LIGHT RELIEF

**Tired of living in the dark, Virginie and Harry Dingley bought a grand old house and turned it into a bright family home**

FEATURE PAT GARRATT  
PHOTOGRAPHY AMANDA TURNER

**H**aving spent much of her childhood in bustling West Africa, Belgian-born Virginie Dingley felt quite isolated when she relocated to a small Cotswolds village with her property developer fiancé, Harry. ‘It was a sweet cottage, but we seemed to live in the basement kitchen, which was dark,’ she says. ‘I felt like a rat! Seeking a house with more light in a place with some buzz, the couple settled on nearby Cheltenham.

The five-bedroom townhouse they found on an elegant, tree-lined street appealed and, as the couple were planning a family, the size didn’t deter them. Nor did the fact that it needed some attention. ‘It was old, tired and had woodchip wallpaper everywhere,’ recalls Virginie.

All the room layouts cried out for improvement, too. So they decided to turn the old kitchen that was squeezed into a tiny side room into a snug, and change the rear sitting room, which offered great garden views, into a spacious kitchen-diner. The basement, with its separate entrance, was earmarked as having potential to be



## SITTING ROOM

**The piano is rarely played but Virginie loves it just as a beautiful piece of furniture.**  
Indienne Tint wallpaper, £56.40m, Lewis & Wood. Quality walnut bevelled mirror, £30, Mayfair Furniture, has this look



I



## 1 HALL

**The large, decorative clock face and other items add charm.**  
Take a look at the Kensington clock, £55, Newgate Clocks. Church pew painted

in Slipper Satin estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres; walls painted in Old White estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, both Farrow & Ball

## INSPIRING



## SITTING ROOM

**An eclectic mix of accessories adds intrigue to the pared-back palette.** Woodroffe wing chair, £565; New England outdoor rattan coffee table, £320, would work in here, both Oka. Try Antique Crystal Chandeliers for a comparable light fitting



## HOME TRUTHS

**THE PROPERTY** Semi-detached Georgian townhouse  
**LOCATION** Gloucestershire  
**ROOMS** Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, TV room/snug, laundry room, cloakroom, five bedrooms (two en suite), bathroom. Plus a self-contained two-bedroom flat in the basement  
**PURCHASED** 2000  
**PREVIOUS PROPERTY** 'We moved here from a small, two-bedroom cottage in the Cotswolds,' says Virginie.





#### KITCHEN

**Dusty pink adds a feminine twist.**

Island painted in Dead Salmon and units in Dovetail estate eggshell, both £53 for 2.5 litres; walls painted in Cornforth White estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, all Farrow & Ball

## DECORATING TIP

*If you're unsure about choosing colours for a room, just pick out an accent from a cushion or a picture and build the scheme around it'*

rented out, and an en suite was to be created out of a small bedroom. The whole building had to be relumbered and rewired as well.

Carrying out this amount of work was extremely disruptive – especially the messy and noisy kitchen refit, which coincided with the birth of their daughter Nina, as well as Virginie's mother falling seriously ill. 'The entire project was delayed,' recalls Virginie. 'In the end, it took about a year to complete.'

All wall colours and fabrics were chosen by Virginie, who describes her decorating style as quirky rather than conventional. She painted much of the interior, too, and experimented with discreet wallpaper.

With its soothing decor and elegant furnishings, the Dingleys' house now has an almost swan-like serenity. 'However, our two children – Nina, now 14, and Manon, 12 – both felt that I had played it a bit safe and relied too much on greys and off-whites,' says Virginie. 'So in Manon's bedroom, I agreed to paint some parts raspberry pink and Nina's has a touch of blue.'

'I've lived in England for 23 years, with 15 spent in this house,' adds Virginie. 'And although I still feel like a foreigner, this place is definitely my home. What I love is that when we go away, however enjoyable the holiday, I'm always happy to come back here.' 

### 1 & 2 KITCHEN-DINER

**The table is perfectly positioned to enjoy views of the garden.** Prestigious Textiles Italian Garden Paradiso blind fabric, £11.76m, Fashion Interiors, is similar to this one. Camargue wooden dining chair, £169, Oka

### fair and had it copied by a local carpenter.

A pair of small rustic wooden marble-top vanity units, £621 each, Woodpecker Interiors, will create this look

### 3 BATHROOM

**Virginie spotted a similar vanity unit at a furniture trade**

**This design is full of colour and fun.** Personalised Love Letter cushion, £50, Notonthehighstreet.com. Bunting, £2.25 per flag, Meri Meri



I

2



**MASTER BEDROOM**  
**Wardrobes painted the same colour as the walls enhance the feeling of light and space.** Albany double quilt, £275; Albany cushion cover, from £35, both The White Company. Malmö bedside table, £245, Oka



3

4



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## HALL

The original arched door is a key feature of the entrance, which is carpeted in textural flooring.

Sisal Bouclé carpet in Bentley, £37sq m,  
Alternative Flooring



# SINGING ITS PRAISES

Nadya Savannah Sawney and her husband Stuart can't speak highly enough of the former chapel they lovingly restored

FEATURE RACHEL LEEDHAM | PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH

**N**adya Savannah Sawney had a real incentive to get the refurbishment of her new home completed quickly. She and her husband Stuart decided to move into a caravan in the garden of a friend's house in Henley-on-Thames while the renovation of their converted Oxfordshire chapel was taking place. 'Anyone who has attempted this in winter will know how bitterly cold it is in the morning before you get the heating on,' she explains. 'It was an extra incentive to get the job finished in six weeks.'

Nadya met her deadline, and she and Stuart moved in just after Christmas two years ago. 'Completing a project at such speed means that you have to make a lot of important decisions in a short space of time – it's not something I'd usually recommend,' says Nadya. 'There was still some tweaking to be



## STAIRCASE

The convex mirrors that Nadya bought at Lots Road Auctions help to brighten this area. Similar Porthole mirrors, from £59 for a small size (Dia 40cm), Graham and Green

done once we moved in, and we also had to wait until spring to replace the windows, all of which were rotten.'

The house, a 200-year-old Methodist chapel in a small hamlet, was bought by a builder in 1989 and converted into a home, but since then, the property had been let and neglected. 'It had major damp problems,' says Nadya, 'but I fell in love with the building and its secluded location. It's so hidden away, you don't really know it's there.'

An upside-down layout, consisting of three bedrooms and a bathroom on the ground level with the living space on the first floor, already existed, but the couple were struck by how hard it was to enjoy the views of rolling farmland from the sitting area. 'You pretty much had to bend down to see



**DECORATING TIP** *'Wall colour is the soul of your design. If you get that right, the rest of the scheme will follow'*

UNIQUE



## HOME TRUTHS

### THE PROPERTY

A converted Methodist chapel, dating to the early 1900s

### LOCATION

North Oxfordshire

### ROOMS

Hall, sitting room/

kitchen-diner, three bedrooms,

bathroom

### PURCHASED 2012

### PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'We lived in a two-bedroom flat

in a converted Victorian house in

Buckinghamshire before moving

here,' says Nadya.

### SITTING ROOM

Nadya had the sofas custom made so that they blend seamlessly with her scheme of predominantly grey pieces.

Sofas, made to a design by Decor Diva Interiors by Hammonds Upholstery. Lacquered coffee table, £795; Navaho kilim print velvet cushion fabric (on right hand sofa, centre), £112m, both Andrew Martin. Similar rug, Jute Bouclé in Flax, from £69 for 91 x 152cm, West Elm





## BEDROOM

**A dusky pink paint colour creates a cosy feel.**  
Walls and ceiling painted in Dead Salmon estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Similar cowhide rug, from £195, The French Bedroom Company



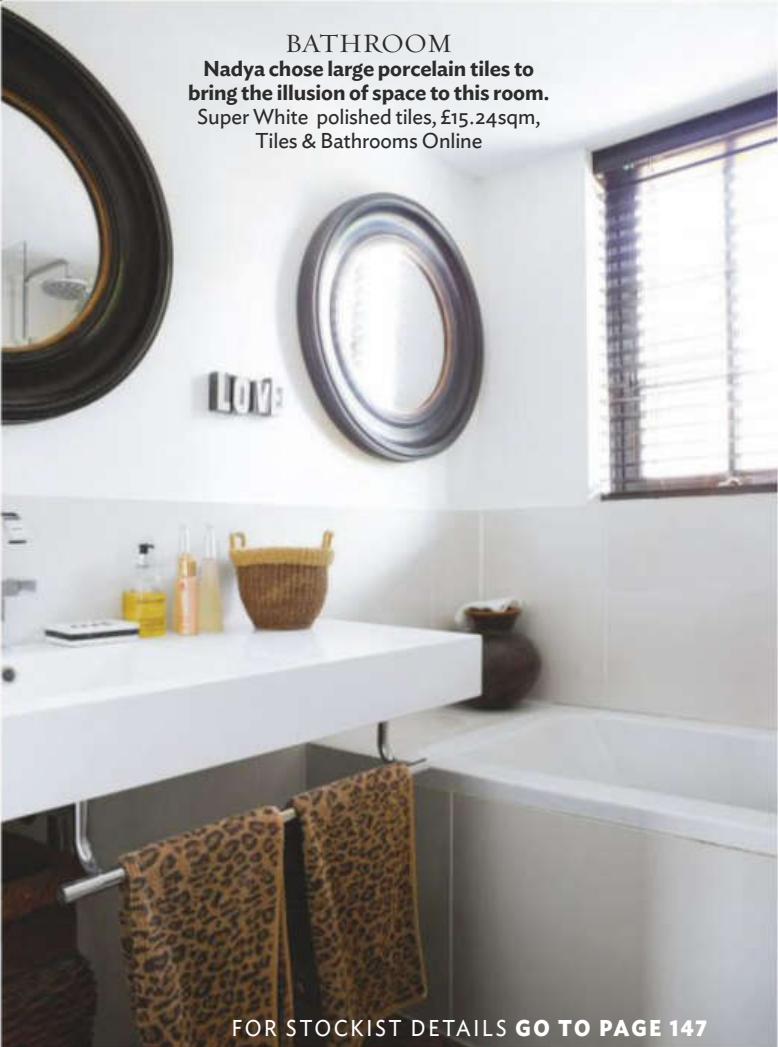
outside,' explains Nadya. So they added windows to the north and south façades of the building. 'Now you arrive at the top of the stairs and have a glorious view across fields, it's very special.'

Nadya, who launched her own interiors practice six years ago, says that she found the open-plan living space a challenge. 'It isn't a huge room and yet it needed to be a kitchen, dining room and sitting room all rolled into one,' she explains. 'I didn't want to enter the room and immediately notice the kitchen.'

Her solution was to choose tonal shades of grey for all the key pieces, including the sofas, coffee table and worktops. There are no wall units in the kitchen area and the extractor fan was chosen because it resembles a TV. 'It's easy on the eye – it doesn't shout, "I'm a cooker hood",' says Nadya. 'You simply read the room as a whole rather than seeing it as lots of different parts.'

To help create this sense of visual flow, the beams have been painted the same soft grey as the walls and ceiling. Punchy patterns, including a zebra-hide rug, an ikat print lampshade and bold kilim armchairs punctuate the muted backdrop. There's a little seating area where Nadya and Stuart have breakfast, looking out over the fields. 'It's very uplifting,' says Nadya. Downstairs is the couple's bedroom. 'The ceiling is low, but I painted it the same dusky pink as the walls, so there isn't a break, which would have made it appear even lower.'

Thanks to her eye for colour and texture, Nadya has given the chapel a new chapter in its life. 'I have a sense that our home is happy now that it's warm and being taken care of,' she says.



## BATHROOM

**Nadya chose large porcelain tiles to bring the illusion of space to this room.**  
Super White polished tiles, £15.24sqm, Tiles & Bathrooms Online

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# THE SOURCE

*Erica Miller shows how you can achieve the style secrets in this issue's homes*

## Design ideas



### GILDED CEILING



Pages  
138–141

Emily Swift-Jones has created a luxurious gilded ceiling in her hall. Highly original in approach, this rich, burnished patina has been created by opting for an antiqued finish, ensuring a more

toned-down look. Surprisingly easy to accomplish, this standout look has been achieved by applying squares of gold leaf to the ceiling. Always ensure that the surface is smooth and clean, as any imperfections will show through the leaf. Once applied, it is essential to seal the surface with a special metal leaf lacquer or varnish. Alternatively, if you would like to recreate this opulent look with a guaranteed clean finish, seek help from a specialist decorator or professional gilder.

### KITCHEN COLOURS



Pages  
130–133

The Chisholms have opted for a palette of natural tones in their spacious kitchen. Dark charcoal grey cabinetry works beautifully alongside a soft grey kitchen island, natural stone flooring, wooden furniture and accessories and fresh white walls. The result is a subtle, harmonious colour scheme that is comfortable on the eye. Working with a controlled palette of colours like this is ideal for creating a relaxed look that does not jar the senses. The basic principle of creating a harmonious room scheme is to choose no more than three closely related colours to maintain the right balance. Essential texture has been added to this soothing room scheme with the introduction of natural materials such as wood and stone.

### CLEVER STORAGE



Pages  
66–69

A stylish diagonal shelving unit provides an inventive approach to storage in the formerly unused space beside Charlotte Hamel's staircase. The dark wood of the shelf unit contrasts dramatically with the white walls, which helps bring attention to the shelves as a unique design feature, while red accents give the monochrome scheme pops of colour. The slanting shelves create handy cubes in which Charlotte has created a quirky and original display of her favourite shoes and boxes. Always an eye-catching solution, this idea would work equally well if the cubbyholes were filled with stacks of colour-coded books or a collection of wine bottles.

# Inspired shopping



## Circular dining table and chairs

If you admire the neat design of Emily Swift-Jones' dining furniture, try the Flaye round dining table in European hardwood with optional leather underbelly, £3,164; and the Aye dining chair, £1,469 each, by Team 7 for Wharfside.



## Ornate chandelier

The finishing touch in the Baths' master bedroom is a glamorous chandelier. Try this Fifty Shades model, £99, The French Bedroom Company.



Pages 57–60



## Garden room

If you covet a summerhouse with glazed windows like the one in Lesley Bailie's garden try this beautiful National Trust by Crane Oxford summerhouse in Painter's Grey, 2.4 x 2.4m, £5,695, John Lewis.

Pages 70–73



## Bishop's crook finial

Lesley Bailie has fitted unfussy wrought-iron curtain poles with simple crook design finials in her bedroom. The finial is the decorative ornament on the end of the pole. For something comparable try the 25mm Bishop's Crook finial, £26 each, Jim Lawrence.



## Stylish tablecloth

Decorative and distinctive, a pretty tablecloth creates the right impression in the Burles' dining room. For something equally graceful try the Lenne Bjerre Adeline Rose tablecloth grey, £88, Houseology.



Pages 122–125

## Carved chest

A dark wood chest with elaborate carved detail takes centre stage in Nicky Heard's entrance hall. For a piece in a similar vein try this Colonial TV unit in reclaimed teak, £485, Puji.



Pages  
76–79**Elegant gold mirror**

A large circular gold mirror creates a striking focal point above the fireplace in the Routledges' sitting room. An alternative to this eye-catching design is the Nigella mirror in antique brass finish, £249, Atkin & Thyme.

Pages  
97–100**Steel coffee table**

A large, contemporary steel-framed coffee table works perfectly in Nadya Savannah Sawney's living space. For something comparable, try the Kensal rectangular coffee table with white marble top and polished steel base, £659, Lagoon.

Pages  
26–30**Armchair and matching footstool**

The Clements have created a comfy corner in their kitchen-diner with a Mid-Century style armchair and footstool in velvet. For similar try the Anna armchair in navy blue velvet, £699; and matching stool, £225, Fishpools.

Pages  
130–133**Paisley bedding**

The bed is dressed with paisley bedlinen in soft mauves and greys in Veronica Rodriguez's bedroom. For a likewise investment piece try the Anastasia Paisley throw with suede trim, £380, de Le Cuona.

**Multi-purpose bunk bed**

Sam Routledge's bedroom has a cleverly designed white bunk bed. Try the Farrington high sleeper with desk, £1,250, Aspace. It incorporates a bed, a double door wardrobe, a storage drawer, a book shelf and a three-drawer desk.

**Vintage-style trunks**

A pair of stylish vintage chests provide storage space in the Chisholms' master bedroom. Recreate this look with these three-piece black trunks, £305, Sweetpea & Willow.



# Design solutions

## FITTING IN A DESK

*However compact the space, you can create a well-designed home-working area*



### SIMPLE BOARD DESK



Pages  
57–60

In the Bath home, a simple wooden board serves as a desk, with old wooden stools that can be tucked away. Above, a small but well-designed workspace has been created within a loft room. A simple wall-hung desk unit has been custom made and walls have been painted in bright and breezy colours. This idea would work equally well if the work station was built into a small nook or alcove. Lower wall in Blazer Red modern emulsion, upper wall in Stiffkey Blue modern emulsion, both £42 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball.

### BESPOKE SOLUTION



Pages  
76–79

A stylish but compact study area has been created in a narrow hallway between rooms in the Routledge home. The key to working in a tiny space like this is to keep everything as simple as possible. Here, interior designers bB Design House have installed a custom-made floating timber desk in a 6ft wide hall between a living room and a kitchen to achieve a functional workspace. To free up desk space, pendant lights hang above it and a translucent chair makes the space feel even larger. Prices on request.

### UNDERSTAIRS OFFICE



Pages  
20–25

In the Bannister house, a stylish home office tucked beneath the stairs in one corner of the sitting room fits seamlessly with the rest of the room. So many of our homes have ‘dead spaces’ – areas which are left unused or neglected. Here, an awkward-shaped area has been transformed into a light and airy bespoke home office. A generous curved desk has been built into the corner and white cabinetry transforms this dark area into a bright space. Understairs home office concept, from £3,000, Neville Johnson.

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1630 Dove multi-fuel stove in matte black, £1,887 Morsø



Caron 7.3kw woodburning stove in cream or green enamel, £899, Ludlow Stoves



Ludlow multi-fuel stove in matte black, from £975, Aga



F100 multi-fuel stove in ivory enamel, from £1,468, Jøtul



Bellingham 12kw multi-fuel stove in matte black, £1,399, Dimplex



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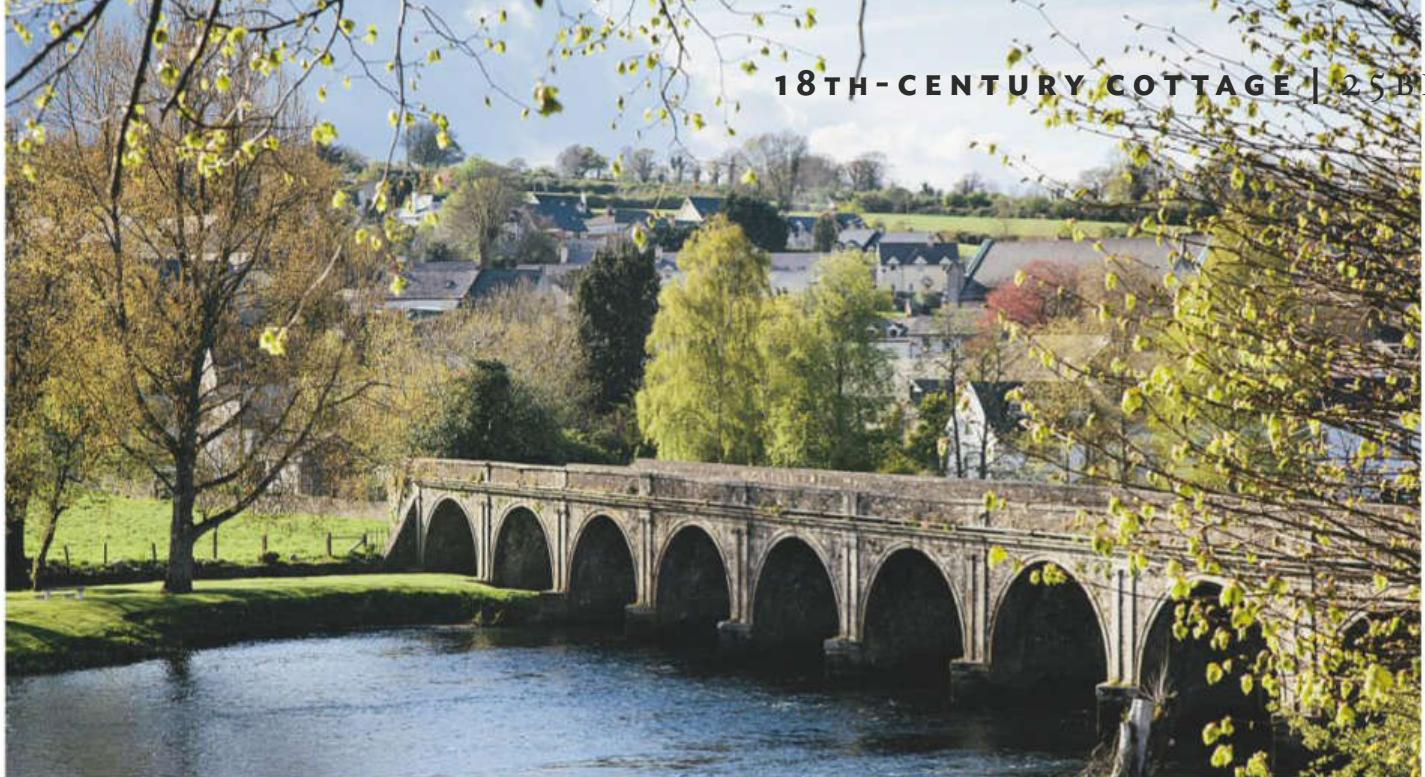
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# Rural CHARM

Jadzia Kaminska's luck was in when an idyllic cottage came on the market in her dream location

FEATURE PENNY CRAWFORD-COLLINS | PHOTOGRAPHY PHILIP LAUTERBACH

**DISTINCTIVE**

**HOME TRUTHS**

**THE PROPERTY** Mid 18th-century worker's cottage  
**LOCATION** Kilkenny, Ireland  
**ROOMS** Sitting room, dining room, breakfast room, kitchen, four bedrooms (one en suite), bathroom  
**PURCHASED** 2012  
**PREVIOUS PROPERTY** 'We also have a stone cottage in nearby Kells,' says Jadzia.



### KITCHEN

**Tongue-and-groove units add to the style of the cottage.**  
Cabinets painted in Wimborne White estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball.  
Grundtal utensil rack, £4, Ikea



### SITTING ROOM

**The classic open fire throws out plenty of heat so it's warm and snug in winter.**  
Taupe Plain canvas pencil pleat curtains, from £18, Tesco Direct.  
Traditional gilt mirror, £99, Ayers & Graces, is a match



### DINING ROOM

**This is the perfect place to entertain guests.**

Bramley cream dining table, £1,000, Laura Ashley, is similar. Handmade terracotta tiles, £59.95sq m, Fired Earth, are comparable. Doors painted in Blue Ground estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball

### BREAKFAST ROOM

**A window seat offers pretty views out to the garden.**  
For a chair like this one try Maple carver, £199, John Lewis



**BATHROOM**

**The wooden floor and ceiling add warmth and texture.**  
Valencia Beach White wall tiles, £164.47sq m, Fired Earth.  
Hamilton traditional chrome towel rail, £140, Victorian  
Plumbing, is a good alternative. Panelling painted in Skylight  
estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball

**MASTER BEDROOM**

**Tucked below the eaves, this room has a mix of old and new.**  
Malm bed has this look, £165; Kroby table lamp, £17, both Ikea.  
Grey split willow trunk, £22, Dunelm, suits this style. For a  
blanket like this one try the basket weave throw, £70, John Lewis.  
For information about staying in this cottage, visit soulfulstays.ie

**L**iving in County Kilkenny, Jadzia Kaminska and her partner David Doohoe had grown to love the area's beautiful historic villages, with their pretty pubs and riverside locations. 'The surroundings are so picturesque that it's actually been used as a location for a number of films,' says Jadzia. So back in 2012 when the couple had the chance to buy a house nearby, they simply couldn't resist. 'The property overlooks the River Nore and the views are spectacular. It has a small garden that's easy to maintain and it's just off the main village square, so it was ideal.'

Originally three artisan cottages, over the years it has been converted into one spacious dwelling. 'Although it was packed with character, the interior was a mishmash of colours and styles and it was very dark and dated,' explains Jadzia. 'Even the exterior was a bit off-putting as it was painted in

a bright mustard yellow.' But having already renovated two properties prior to this, the pair could see its potential. 'It didn't need any structural work, just a few minor repairs,' explains Jadzia. 'And the tweaks needed were mostly decorative, so we knew it wouldn't cost a huge amount to transform it.'

There was a lot of furniture left in the house so the couple decided to salvage and recycle as much as possible. 'We started by sanding the floors and painting everything white, which made it feel instantly brighter,' says Jadzia. 'We were loath to throw anything out as we felt all the old bits and pieces that had been left behind really belonged to the place. And, because we both loved the character of the traditional tongue-and-groove kitchen, all we did was freshen it up with a new coat of paint.'

A mixture of brightly coloured throws and cushions adds a vibrant and fun feel

to the interiors. 'A friend of ours imports them from India, and as I adore colour, I just had to have them,' says Jadzia. 'I've used them on the sofas and in the bedrooms – they really give the place that lived-in feel.'

To make the exterior more welcoming, the couple painted it white, with doors and windows contrasted in a subtle duck-egg blue. The small garden to the side of the property was also in need of attention, and as a keen gardener Jadzia was able to indulge her love of nature, creating an idyllic space that has a lovely mix of plants and pretty stone walls. 'It's still a work in progress and there is an area to the back of it that needs to be cleaned up and planted, so whenever I get a chance, this is on my to do list,' she explains.

The result is a beautiful home that is warm and welcoming. 'We love this cottage and are so pleased with how it's turned out,' says Jadzia. 'It's the perfect retreat.'

### **FAVOURITE ITEM 'I love the 18th-century Victorian plate covers in the dining room because they add character to the space'**

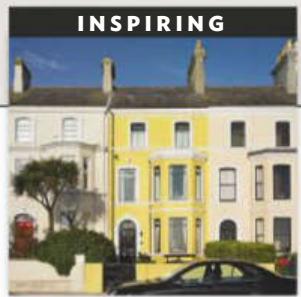
# SEA VIEW

*Eleanor and Stephen Blayney used colour and light to make their coastal home a favourite port of call for friends and family*

**FEATURE** MANDI MILLAR  
**PHOTOGRAPHY** ASHLEY MORRISON



## INSPIRING



## HOME TRUTHS

**THE PROPERTY** Victorian townhouse, built in 1901

**LOCATION** County Down, Northern Ireland

**ROOMS** Sitting room, drawing room, dining room, kitchen-diner, four bedrooms, two bathrooms

**PURCHASED** 2007

**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**

'Previously, we lived in a modern house nearby,' says Eleanor.



## SITTING ROOM

'We love having this space upstairs as it means we can really enjoy the sea views,' says Eleanor.

Walls painted in Mountain Dew perfect matt emulsion, £39 for 2.5 litres, Designers Guild. Crystal drop chandelier, £220, Made With Love Designs, is similar. Checked sofa upholstered in Suffolk Check Bluebell £24.50m, Ian Mankin



Eleanor and Stephen Blayney let their hearts rule their heads when they bought a four-storey Victorian townhouse on the County Down coast.

'We love living by the sea,' explains Eleanor, 'so when we saw a For Sale sign outside this place, we had to take a look.'

'The property was structurally sound, had been well looked after and its location was perfect, but we weren't sure about taking on a project,' she continues. 'It came with all the inherent challenges of a century-old house – before the days of insulation, for instance – and the layout wasn't ideal.' However, with stunning seascape

**DESIGN ADVICE**  
*'If you have a lot of antique pieces but also want to add some modern elements, keep them to one room, which is what we've done in the kitchen'*

views, the Blayneys knew this was too good an opportunity to miss. 'Once we moved in, we had no reservations about our decision,' says Eleanor.

As soon as they were settled, the couple, who love entertaining, started with the kitchen. 'It was the one element of the house that wasn't quite right,' explains Eleanor, 'and we knew that extending into the side return would give us the extra space we needed to have a large kitchen-diner.' They decided to hire an architect to manage the build. 'It was a good decision,' she reflects. 'He did everything for us – he tendered for the builders and also negotiated our way through planning.'

As their home is located in a conservation area, Eleanor and Stephen did have to make a few compromises. Initially, they wanted a flat roof with a large skylight, but they ended up opting



#### KITCHEN-DINER

**Glass bifold doors mean that the entertaining space is almost doubled when weather permits.**

Ringhult white hi-gloss kitchen, around £6,000, Ikea. Porcelain tiles, £22m, Ceramica Tiles. KitchenAid artisan stand mixer in Raspberry Ice, from £386, John Lewis



#### DINING AREA

**'The bright green wall colour and potted plants tie the inside to the outside in this vibrant space,' says Eleanor.**

Wall painted in Geranium Leaf matt emulsion, £39 for 2.5 litres, Sanderson. Henry chair, £199, John Lewis, is near-identical. Provence tablecloth, £43, LinenMe, has this look. Kroby light, £29, Ikea

## DRAWING ROOM

**The formality of this space is the perfect backdrop for the couple's antique furniture and family heirlooms.**

Beth mirror, £350, Laura Ashley. Gold French Chair, £710, Out There Interiors, is a match. Bishkek Turkish-design rug, £1,385, Oka



## DINING ROOM

**By upholstering the chairs in an array of bright fabrics, this classic scheme has been instantly modernised.**

For similar fabric to the chairs try the Heavenly collection, £54m, Villa Nova. Curtina Marlowe pleat curtains, £38, Wayfair, have this look



for a pitched slate roof with five skylights. ‘Although it wasn’t our first choice, it was a good outcome,’ says Eleanor, ‘as we wanted to respect the building’s heritage. We also reinstalled a fireplace in the sitting room and channelled more light inside with sun tunnels in the hall. And to make the house more eco-friendly, we fitted solar panels on the south-facing rear roof.’

Throughout the work, the couple lived in the house, despite the dust and a faulty heating system. But once the builders were gone, they were finally able to turn their property into a home. ‘We’ve collected quite a few pieces of furniture over the years – bought and inherited – and they all mean something to us,’ says Eleanor. ‘All it took was a coat of paint for a quick update as I loved the idea of bringing colour into the decor. It’s such a cost-effective way to make your interior unique and it’s easy to change if you fancy something different.’

And this is exactly what Eleanor has done, with favourite items upcycled in vibrant hues that add character to the home. ‘Our style is organic and eclectic, because it has grown with us,’ she says, ‘and that’s just the way we like it.’ 

## STYLE ADVICE

*‘It’s important to make the most of the light in every room – it’s a fundamental element of how the space will look once it’s decorated and furnished’*

## 1 BATHROOM

‘We decided to paint the bathroom walls rather than tile them completely as it’s easier to change the colour,’ says Eleanor. Shutters, from £450, Fraser Nolan. Walls painted in Elephant’s Breath modern emulsion, £42 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Cream metal butterfly wall shelf, £34, Melody Maison, is comparable

## 2 MASTER BEDROOM

‘I love the white backdrop in here as I can dress it up with furnishings,’ says Eleanor. Avignon by Dorma bedlinen, £95 for a double, JustLinen, would work well in here. Mirror and chest of drawers painted in Passionflower eggshell, £50 for 2.5 litres, Fired Earth





#### GUEST BEDROOM

The couple opted for a more traditional country look in this welcoming space. Dotty quilt, £120, Cath Kidston. Laney table lamp, £63, Wayfair, is a good alternative

# Insight

## BUILDING A KITCHEN EXTENSION

**Keen to create an open-plan kitchen as the Blayneys have? Consider these points first**



**O**pen-plan living is at the heart of the modern home, with the kitchen becoming a space to cook, eat, entertain and relax with the family. The key is to create an addition that seamlessly blends with the rest of your house.

### Consider all options

Kitchen extensions are one of the most popular remodelling projects in period homes and a covetable addition to new properties. Too often, however, the layout of a kitchen is designed to accommodate the extension, rather than the other way round. Considering your lifestyle and how you plan on using the space before building is a more ergonomic solution.

Thorough planning is essential – thinking about what you want out of your kitchen in advance will increase the design and storage opportunities for the space. Do you have a large family? Are you a keen cook? Do you like to entertain? Is the TV always on when you prepare meals, or do you prefer it to be out of sight? The answers to these questions will determine the design of your scheme.

An extension is a great way to increase the size of your existing kitchen, creating one large room, although 'zoning' is an increasingly popular choice. Instead of connecting the living, dining and cooking areas by using the same colours, surfaces and finishes throughout, a mix of different floor finishes, paint colours

and lighting will help to retain the feel of separate rooms. Also consider cooking aromas and noises when deciding on a multifunctional scheme. If you're including a living area within the extension, avoid disturbing the other members of the family while cooking by choosing whisper-quiet appliances. Soft fabrics and materials will also help to reduce any unwanted echo.

### Ask the experts

From side and rear extensions similar to the Blayneys', to conservatories and basement designs, there are a number of options available. To help you decide on the most suitable extension for your needs, start by asking your kitchen designer for advice. Extensions are now a common request, so many companies will be able to recommend a good builder or architect. It's also worth asking friends and family for recommendations of tradesmen in your area.

For minor internal alterations, however, planning permission is rarely required, unless the property is listed. A single-storey rear extension, for example, can often be achieved under permitted development, while obtaining permission for a simple side extension is also relatively straightforward. Any major structural work, however, must be approved by a building inspector and requires the submission of a building notice application to your local council.

### EXPERT EYE



*'Kitchens that are situated in full view of the living room will need to be easy to keep clean and will need to remain uncluttered. So, ideally, appliances should be fully integrated'*

ROBERT BURNETT, HOLLOWAYS OF LUDLOW

### PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

'Ensure that your new extension will provide an adequate supply of natural light. Lots of side extensions, for example, will have all-glass roofs for this purpose, but the amount of light a kitchen receives depends on the property. For instance, in the case of terraced houses, there's a danger an extension will cut out a lot of light.'

**The equipment you plan to include in your new scheme will determine the design of your extension. Appliances are built to set dimensions, whereas cupboards are designed to be flexible in size. If you plan on having just one oven and a microwave, a single tall cupboard to house them will probably suffice; but if you want warming drawers, multiple ovens and American refrigeration, it's a much bigger element. Tall cupboards will dominate the space and you need to allow room for them.**

Consider whether an island is important to you. There's a sense of theatre that comes with having a central unit, but it can compromise on the available space for a table and chairs.

**It's crucial to think about extraction at the early stages of design. If you're having a flat-roofed extension and an island, you'll need to consider how to ventilate the room.'**

KEITH ATKINS, DESIGNSPACE LONDON

### ADDRESS BOOK

#### ■ Trust Mark, 0333 555 1234, [trustmark.org.uk](http://trustmark.org.uk)

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#### ■ Royal Institute of British Architects, 020 7580 5533, [architecture.com](http://architecture.com)

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#### INSPIRING



#### HOME TRUTHS

**THE PROPERTY** 1960s villa  
**LOCATION** South Belfast

**ROOMS** Sitting room, family room, kitchen-diner, cloakroom, three bedrooms (one en suite), bathroom

**PURCHASED** 2011

**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**  
'We lived in an apartment nearby before moving here,' says Patricia.

## KITCHEN-DINER

**'My parents bought this second-hand table in the 1970s. We dined around it every night when I was a child,' says Patricia.** Vintage Ercol Goldsmith dining chair, from £80, Etsy. Vitra Panton dining chair in Chartreuse, £208, Heal's. Calligaris Andromeda table lamp, £470, Design Icons



## DINING AREA

**A bright focal-point wall creates a vibrant area where the family can socialise and spend time together.** Muuto Unfold ceiling light, £104, Paper Rooms. Marigold absolute matt emulsion, £37 for 2.5 litres, Little Greene, is similar to this wall colour



# ROOM TO GROW

Patricia McGinnis has given a dated 1960s interior a complete remodel that's ideal for modern family life

FEATURE MANDI MILLAR | PHOTOGRAPHY ASHLEY MORRISON



A mother always knows best – just ask Patricia McGinnis. 'I hadn't even been looking for a new home when my mum saw this one in Belfast,' explains

Patricia, co-owner of interiors store Maven. 'Lalit, my 7-year-old son, and I had been living in an apartment nearby and I loved the area, but we were running out of space, which, of course, Mum had noticed.'

On viewing the 1960s house, Patricia was only too aware of the amount of work

it needed. 'It had a dated exterior, and inside, the layout was boxy with a small kitchen and bedrooms that weren't well proportioned,' she says. 'It needed a total refurbishment as well as an extension, but I could see it had great potential.'

Patricia spent time planning the project. 'It was important to see how the light moved around the rooms before I changed anything,' she explains. After decisions were made, first on the hit list was the kitchen, which would be converted into a kitchen-diner. 'I wanted to create



#### SITTING ROOM

A free-flowing layout creates a harmonious feel throughout.

Sofa upholstered in Poetica Weaves Parquet by Harlequin, £37.12m, Fashion Interiors. Walls painted in French Grey Dark absolute matt emulsion, £37 for 2.5 litres, Little Greene

#### DECORATING TIP 'Use picture ledges for photographs and artwork'

##### 1 BATHROOM

**'This space may not be to everyone's taste, but I like to be bold with designs,' says Patricia.** Prismatics Pumpkin gloss wall tile, £29.85sq m, Tile Mountain, would suit this style

##### 2 MASTER BEDROOM

**The industrial-style wall light in here is one of Patricia's favourite items.**

Edison cage light, £75, Artifact Lighting, is a match. Normann Copenhagen table, £162, Nest.co.uk

somewhere we could spend quality time, both as a family and with friends.'

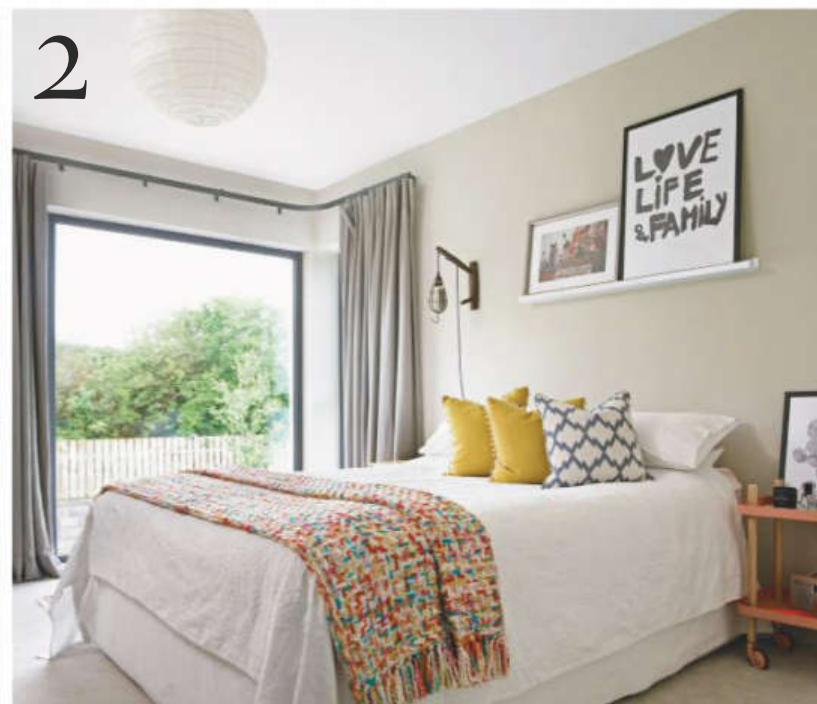
Working with Michael Galbraith at Rapport Architects, Patricia also decided to extend into the garden. Then, upstairs she reconfigured the layout to create three double bedrooms, a bathroom and an en suite. 'This stage was very frustrating as it took six months for planning to come

through,' says Patricia. 'But once permission was granted, with the help of my family, who are builders, the renovations went smoothly. I was very lucky as I could live in my flat throughout – it would have been impossible otherwise as the entire property had to be rewired, replumbed and replastered.'

With the project complete, Patricia and Lalit were at last able to move into their



I



2



## SITTING ROOM

'I found this Parker Knoll egg chair beside a skip with its labels still intact,' says Patricia.

Milan Direct is a good place to source egg chairs like this one, from £209. Juniper coffee table, £244, Wayfair, is comparable

*– by moving them around, you can change the look of a room in an instant'*

new home. 'The feeling of space was terrific,' says Patricia, who describes her interior decorating style as modern bohemian. 'That said, there are many Mid-Century pieces in this house and that's not necessarily my style. But in this 1960s building, they felt right.' Some of Patricia's choices are bold, but she has no regrets. 'Despite a tiler saying my orange

tiles in the bathroom looked like something from a cruise ship, I love them.'

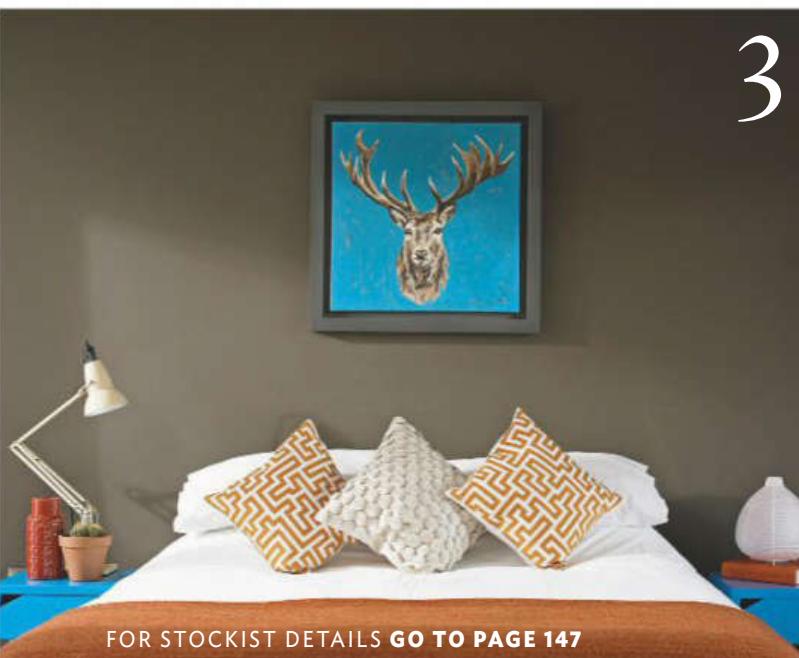
However, although she has now fully renovated and decorated her home, Patricia is not ready to sit back just yet. 'That's what I really enjoy about this place – the fact it will never be finished,' she says. 'I'm always thinking about how I could style a room differently – the master bedroom is next.' **25**

## 3 GUEST BEDROOM

'It's amazing how the blue makes the stag's head look like it's coming out of the wall,' says Patricia. Stag picture, price on request, Sarah Majury. Lamp, £175, Anglepoise. Selje bedside table, £20, Ikea

## 4 EN-SUITE BATHROOM

Including an additional wet room was a luxury. For metro wall tiles like these ones try Topps Tiles, £19.50sq m. Victorian grand rigid riser with shower head, £250, Victorian Plumbing, has this look



FOR STOCKIST DETAILS GO TO PAGE 147

3

4





# DREAM SCHEMES

*Crown Imperial's fabulous showroom puts  
the fun back into choosing a new kitchen*



This modern classic design is available in 21 stunning painted finishes. Cotswold oak kitchen, from £15,000, Crown Imperial

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Choose a kitchen with timeless elegance. Ashton furniture in solid ash, from £15,000, Crown Imperial

# ABLAZE WITH COLOUR

*Nicky Heard's traditional country home was given an unexpected injection of jewel-bright shades after an inspirational trip to Indonesia*

FEATURE NAOMI JONES  
PHOTOGRAPHY ROBERT SANDERSON

## INSPIRING



## HOME TRUTHS

**THE PROPERTY** Detached Victorian house

**LOCATION** West Sussex

**ROOMS** Hall, sitting room, dining room/work room, kitchen/breakfast room, utility room, four bedrooms, dressing room, two bathrooms

**PURCHASED** 1999

**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**

'Before we moved here, we lived in a Victorian house in southwest London,' says Nicky.





#### SITTING ROOM

'Green makes a good backdrop for bold colours, just like you'd see in the garden,' says Nicky. For similar curtain fabric, try Sayuri Chintz, £16m, John Lewis. Charcoal/Lime Green cushion, £45; multicoloured throw on sofa, £125; Hot Pink ikat throw, £230, all Nicky Heard



This secluded Victorian house in West Sussex is clearly a warm family home, with much-loved art, antiques and decorative objects collected over the years. But nestling among Nicky Heard's traditional choices are colourful, contemporary touches, such as hot pink and tangerine ikat designs that hint at exotic influences. 'I have to admit, if it wasn't for my daughter, I might not have become so brave with colour,' says Nicky, designer and maker of home furnishings, and mother of two grown-up children, Izzy and Nick, with husband Ged. 'I love the off-whites and greens that I used to decorate the house when we bought it but, these days, Izzy encourages me to be bolder.'

In fact, it was while Nicky was visiting her daughter in Indonesia a few years ago that she was inspired to be more daring. 'Izzy took a two-year job as a scuba-diving instructor, and I flew over to see her,' says Nicky. 'The area is famous for ikat fabric and when I met the people who hand-weave it, I was in awe of their craftsmanship. I instantly fell in love with the incredible patterns and colours.' Nicky came back with as much fabric as she could carry and made dozens of unique throws and cushion covers. 'They've definitely livened up our home,' she smiles.

When the family first moved in, the house was a little smaller than it is today, with a galley kitchen and an underwhelming entrance. Nicky says, 'Having left London in 1999 to raise the children in the countryside, I had a vision of how I wanted us to live, and that included sitting around a big breakfast table, with the children doing their



#### HALL

**An antique oak coffer creates a traditional feel in the entrance, which is part of the new extension.**  
Terracotta floor tiles, £43.25sq m, Walls and Floors. Walls painted in Tuscan Earth matt emulsion, £35.50 for 2.5 litres, Fired Earth. Gourd vase, £1,200, Izzy Rooth

#### FAVOURITE ROOM *'The kitchen/breakfast room is a lovely place to be with family and friends, where we always eat home-cooked food'*

homework or drawing pictures while I cooked dinner.' So, to create the home she'd always wished for, Nicky ensured the builders worked their magic to include a hallway that looks like it has always been there and befits a house of this size, and a kitchen that's perfectly in keeping. 'We kept the original front door, but where we had to put in new fittings, I felt it was important to replicate the Victorian features such as the sash windows and cornices,' she explains.

Terracotta floor tiles, handmade wooden units and a large range cooker help give the kitchen a farmhouse feel, along with a butler sink. 'Once you have the basics in place, you can simply move everything else around them,' says Nicky. 'but I have to say that most of what I did originally is the same today. I chose Shaded White by Farrow & Ball for most of the rooms and I still love it.'

Izzy might not be able to persuade her mother to completely repaint but, along with encouraging those zingy hues, she has added to the array of striking artefacts. 'She is a brilliant ceramicist,' says Nicky, 'and I'm lucky that I get to keep her pieces, at least until she decides to settle down with a home of her own.' Until then, Izzy's creations, and of course those bold colours, are here to stay. 





### LOBBY

**This small space has grand style.**  
Walls in Shaded White estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



### BATHROOM

**Marble and elegant fittings keep this room looking timeless.**  
Perlatto Sicilia marble, £1,750, Marble 2 Marvel. Portland 950 towel rail, £549; Bensham bath shower mixer, £209, both Bathstore



### KITCHEN

**There is plenty of room for family and friends to gather in this country-style space.**  
Bespoke oak table, around £1,200, Traditional Oak and Timber Co. Try Antiques Atlas for similar chairs. Kitchen, from £7,000, Schofield and Crafter. Wall tiles, £40sq m, Barge Tiles



### 3



### I & 2 MASTER BEDROOM

**Traditional toile de Jouy is mixed with exotic pattern for an unexpected twist.**  
For similar curtain fabric try Chinese Toile in Lacquer Red, £84m, Lewis & Wood. Green and Charcoal ikat throw, £275, Nicky Heard. Morris and Co Strawberry Thief cushion in Indigo, £35, John Lewis

### 3 IZZY'S BEDROOM

**Soft blue walls contrast with bright accessories and tropical colours.**  
Rossetti bed, £599, Feather & Black. Hemnes chest of drawers, £115, Ikea. Vase, £1,100, Izzy Rooth



### 2



INSPIRING



## HOME TRUTHS

### THE PROPERTY

Victorian worker's cottage

### LOCATION

West London

### ROOMS

Sitting room,

kitchen-diner, two bedrooms,

bathroom

### PURCHASED 2013

### PREVIOUS PROPERTY

'Before we moved here, I had a

flat in Notting Hill and Chris had

a flat in Brixton,' says Anna.



# PRECISION PLANNED

*Anna Burles' beautiful revamp just goes to prove that the devil is in the detail*

FEATURE RACHEL LEEDHAM | PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH



#### SITTING ROOM

**Classic pieces upholstered in grey and pink velvets tone beautifully with the ice-cream pink walls.**

Three-seat Bluebell sofa, from £1,240, Sofa.com. Vintage medicine cabinet, price on request, Junk Deluxe. Chimney breast painted in Middleton Pink and Great White estate emulsion, both £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball

#### STUDY AREA

**Scaffolding supports this under-stairs workspace.** Vintage chair, price on request, Ormston Saint. Bespoke lamp, price on application, Junk Deluxe

#### KITCHEN-DINER

**The island unit incorporates an old plan chest.**

Old plan chests from £450, Antique-Atlas.com. Moon Beam Penny Round white wall tiles, £54.95sq m, Original Style. Kitchen units, price on request, Howdens



**F**ormer radio journalist Anna Burles used to file seven features an hour. 'It meant producing creative, accurate copy on time,' she recalls. 'I think I've carried that meticulousness over to my work as an interior designer.'

Consequently, when Anna and her partner Chris were choosing where to buy their first home together, nothing was left to chance. 'I'd been living in London's Notting Hill and I wanted to stay in the area as its shops and boutiques were useful for

my work,' says Anna. 'Chris and I share a design studio there and we spent weekends cycling around and were drawn to an enclave of worker's cottages.' So when a two-bed cottage came on the market, they instantly made an offer, which was successful.

Although the previous owners had knocked the two downstairs living spaces together, the footprint was tiny, with the doors to the garden starting where the kitchen now begins. 'We'd done our research and knew that there were precedents for

**MASTER BEDROOM**

An off-white wall makes the perfect backdrop for a set of antlers.

Stag antler on skull, £245, Abbeyhorn.  
Walls painted in Dove Tale estate emulsion,  
£38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball



**LAST WORD** *'Mixing high end with high street in fashion works brilliantly, and I believe the same rule can be applied to interiors'*

ground-floor extensions, but it still took six months to get planning permission,' explains Anna.

'Once the extension was done, we thought long and hard about the way we live,' she continues. 'I designed the island while the rest of the kitchen units were sourced from a high-street supplier and customised with handles made from beautiful fossilised wood. Chris nearly fell off his chair when I told him how much they were, but they do transform the units.'

As a graphic artist and designer, Chris was supportive of Anna's decisions, including the more left-field idea to paint the ground floor in pastel tones. 'It was important to create zones within this open space,' Anna says of the strawberry ice-cream hues used in the sitting area, which change to pale chocolate in the dining space and vanilla in the kitchen. These soft shades are the ideal backdrop to the couple's possessions, which are

predominantly vintage finds picked up at flea markets and antiques shops.

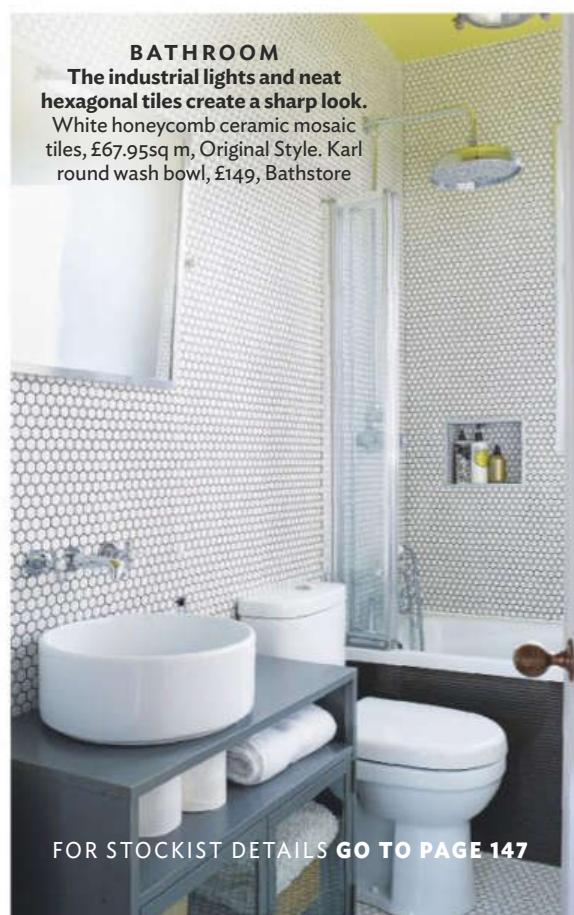
Upstairs, the couple's bedroom is painted a purplish grey, which, teamed with a feathery, cloud-like lampshade, Anna likens to a 'summer storm brewing'. The ceiling is painted the same colour as the walls. 'Ceilings are a crucial part of the design, and I think it's a misconception that they should always be white,' notes Anna, who has proved her point again in the bathroom by painting the ceiling a vivid 1960s yellow.

The recent arrival of baby Margot has seen the second bedroom transformed from a dressing room into a nursery. Further down the line, the couple may choose to extend the cottage again by developing the loft but for the moment, the family are happy to enjoy this beautifully planned home. 'The finishing details make a world of difference,' affirms Anna. 'That's why it's such a pleasure to live here.'

**BATHROOM**

The industrial lights and neat hexagonal tiles create a sharp look.

White honeycomb ceramic mosaic tiles, £67.95sq m, Original Style. Karl round wash bowl, £149, Bathstore



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## INSPIRING



## HOME TRUTHS

**THE PROPERTY**

Cotswold stone manor house

**LOCATION**

West Oxfordshire

**ROOMS** Hall, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, study, cellar, two cloakrooms, four bedrooms (one en suite), bathroom**PURCHASED** 2012**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**

'Before moving here, we rented a property nearby,' says Tania.

## TIME TO NEST

Tania and Martin Chisholm gradually got to know their desired area before finding a home that was right for them and their family

FEATURE ANN BROAD | PHOTOGRAPHY COLIN POOLE



## 1 DINING ROOM

**Subtle decor and rustic materials create an understated feel in here.**

Rococo Mirror by D & J Simons, £125, Wayfair, is similar. Recycled glass vase, £35, Cox & Cox, is a match



## 2 KITCHEN

**Tania and Martin bought the large framed map of Paris from the Marché aux Puces in France.**

Weathered stool, £130, Cox & Cox, suits this style. Wooden trug basket, £30, Notonthehighstreet.com



## KITCHEN

**The striking bespoke cupboards combine classic styling with dramatic colour.**

Cabinets painted in Tanner's Brown estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Sagaform oak cutting board, £23, John Lewis, is near-identical. Wooden bar stool, £85, Alexander & Pearl, would work well here

**F**inding a property with period features and space for a vintage car business was the challenge that Tania and Martin Chisholm set themselves when looking for a family home in the Cotswolds.

'We really enjoy living in the countryside and, after renting in Oxfordshire for 10 years, we'd fallen in love with the location,' says Tania. 'Our sons, Jack, 13, and Harry, 11, also have many friends in the area, so we didn't want to disrupt them too much.' The

couple began searching for their own renovation project, and it wasn't long until they found their dream home in an unspoilt corner of west Oxfordshire.

'When we first saw the interior, it looked as though it was held together by wallpaper,' recalls Tania. 'We'd never taken on a property that required so much work, so it was quite daunting.' But repairs were soon underway. 'We had to go back to the bare stone in 60 per cent of the house,' explains Tania. 'Floors





were dug up and insulated, ceilings strengthened, floorboards replaced and the plumbing and electrics were updated. In all, it took six months and involved 10 different trades to complete the project.'

As the building is Grade II listed, the couple could only refurbish and restore rather than change the footprint. 'The most notable transformation is the hall, as initially the house had four entrances,' says Tania. 'The original door had been made obsolete after the grounds had been divided and sold separately. What is now our front door was once the boiler and boot room.'

Walking through their home, the interior has a strong sense of creative flair. As Tania and Martin both used to work at Sotheby's, their love for antiques is evident. Combined with contemporary art, chic lighting and elegant furniture, the finished look is effortlessly stylish.

The kitchen has a striking scheme with traditional cabinets

painted in a dramatic shade. 'This space is always very busy and a dark hue is extremely practical when you have a large family,' explains Tania. But it is a large framed map of Paris that fills an entire wall, which takes centre stage. 'I'm so happy we didn't compromise on the design,' says Tania. 'Although we're a little bit short on storage because we made a somewhat bold decision to sacrifice another bank of cupboards in favour of the map, it was definitely the right choice.'

Upstairs, the attention to detail continues, with pale walls creating the perfect backdrop for the couple's mix of modern and vintage furnishings, bold artwork, and black-and-white photography.

For now, the Chisholms are happy with the refurbishment. 'We're still hoping to convert the barn into a large entertaining area with office space in the future,' says Tania, 'but at this moment, we are very content with our home and its idyllic countryside location.'

**DECORATING TIP** 'Colour can make a huge impact, so don't shy away from dark shades. After 10 years of renting, we were looking for a house we could really put our mark on'

**1 SITTING ROOM**  
The leather table adds a quirky, vintage touch to this space. Long Island sofa in Rock House viscose linen, £2,610, Sofa.com, is a match. Lancaster Victorian fire extinguisher lamp, £2,170, Bespoke Lights. Edwin & Gray sells similar pommel horse benches, price on application

**2 BATHROOM**  
A novelty shark's head adds a humorous element in here. Retro Metro tiles, £79.99sq m, Fired Earth. Supima cotton towels in Latte, from £3.50 each, John Lewis. Jack the shark wall-mounted animal head, £50, Houseology, is a good alternative





2



## EN-SUITE BATHROOM

**Tania and Martin have created a bold scheme with a red and black colour palette.** Black Emperador polished marble tiles, £59.98 m sq, Mandarin Stone. For a similar roll-top bath try the Cambridge, £599, Bathstore

## MASTER BEDROOM

**'As we both work from home, it was important to create somewhere we could close the office door and relax – this is the perfect space,' says Tania.** Vintage pommel horse, from £990, The Clubhouse. Walls painted in Elephant's Breath estate emulsion, £38 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. Scaramanga is a good place to source vintage trunks like these ones, from £80 each



# FADE to GREY

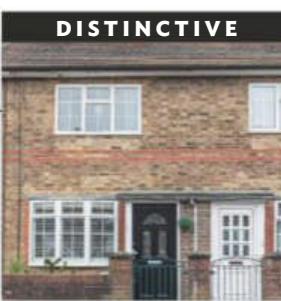
**Daring dark walls offer an ideal backdrop for Laura Bradford's collections of taxidermy, abstract art and upcycled furniture**

**FEATURE** MAXINE BRADY  
**PHOTOGRAPHY** JONATHAN JONES



Having chosen a colour for the sitting room in the West Sussex home she shares with husband Richard, Laura Bradford had a tough job convincing her decorator dad, Ray. 'I wanted all the walls to be grey,' says Laura. 'He and Richard weren't sure – but now they love it. Dark colours have made our home look bigger.'

Before Laura and Richard got their hands on the house, it looked completely different, with nicotine-stained yellow walls. 'There was carpet in the bathroom and pine-clad ceilings,' says Laura. 'The bedrooms were rather dull looking and the kitchen and bathroom were not to our taste either.' The first room to get a makeover was the sitting



## DISTINCTIVE

**HOME TRUTHS**  
**THE PROPERTY** Victorian terrace, built circa 1890  
**LOCATION** Burgess Hill  
**ROOMS** Sitting room, kitchen-diner, bathroom, two bedrooms  
**PURCHASED** 2013  
**PREVIOUS PROPERTY** 'To save up to buy this house, we moved in with our parents for six months. Before that, we rented,' says Laura.



## KITCHEN

The couple kept the original white wooden units but have given it a makeover thanks to a few cans of paint. Cupboards painted in Urban Obsession and Ash White paint mixing kitchen + matt, both £27.98 for 2.5 litres, Dulux. Find similar white owl storage jars at Shabby Store, £19



## SITTING ROOM

Among Laura's collections of stuffed animals and butterflies is her own art – she takes old paintings and adds Star Wars or Harry Potter characters. Walls painted in Shingle Grey emulsion by Valspar, £22 for 2.5 litres, B&Q. Skeleton wrapping paper, £3 per sheet, Willow and Stone



**SITTING ROOM**  
A cosy leather armchair covered by sheepskin throws makes this corner feel inviting.  
Try the Harbrook leather occasional chair, £1,200, Laura Ashley. Sheepskin rug, £35, John Lewis



**BATHROOM**

**Richard ripped out the outdated suite and fitted this modern white one.**

Ceramica Acuto bathroom suite, £299, Plumbworld. Metro white wall tiles, £13.99 for a pack of 25, Homebase



**INSPIRATION** ‘I went to Abigail Ahern’s design school in London, which she holds in her home. Not only did I learn a lot, but also I got to see her wonderful house first hand’

**MASTER BEDROOM**

**Laura upcycled plain white Ikea bedside cabinets with paint, then topped them with concrete blocks.** Sinnerlig flatwoven rug is similar, £50, Ikea. Walls in Valspar India Ink matt emulsion, £22.34 for 2.5 litres, B&Q. Red brick wallpaper, £15, Next

room. Once Laura’s father had finished the walls, the pine fireplace and staircase were then painted in the same shade. Library-themed wallpaper was hung at one end and Laura dressed the room with deer antlers and upcycled tables and lamps. Next, she and her dad tackled the kitchen, painting the cupboard fronts grey, while Richard started on the 1980s bathroom. ‘We opted for metro tiles and simple fixtures and fittings,’ says Laura. She added drama with stuffed crows sitting on the window sill.

Laura has always been drawn to unusual accessories and a touch of the gothic. ‘I love horror movies and zombie films and I’ve been buying stuffed animals and collecting quirky pieces for years,’ she explains. Among the items she has amassed are a large collection of reclaimed furniture, taxidermy animals, retro oil paintings and plaster busts.

The couple’s house is filled with rich colours after they realised that brighter hues weren’t to their taste. ‘When we moved in, we painted the bedroom white,’ says Laura. ‘But we just found it too dull and soon opted for navy blue walls and ceiling instead. It’s transformed the room, making it much more inviting and stylish. Dark colours create a brilliant background to display belongings against.’

Now that their home is almost finished, Laura and Richard are having fun enjoying their space. ‘We’re always moving pieces around, so the house still continues to evolve,’ says Laura. ‘I love buying and collecting pieces for our interior and that won’t stop any time soon.’



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#### KITCHEN

Sleek white cabinets and grey-tiled flooring create a modern feel.

Concrete-effect floor tiles, £26.52sq m,

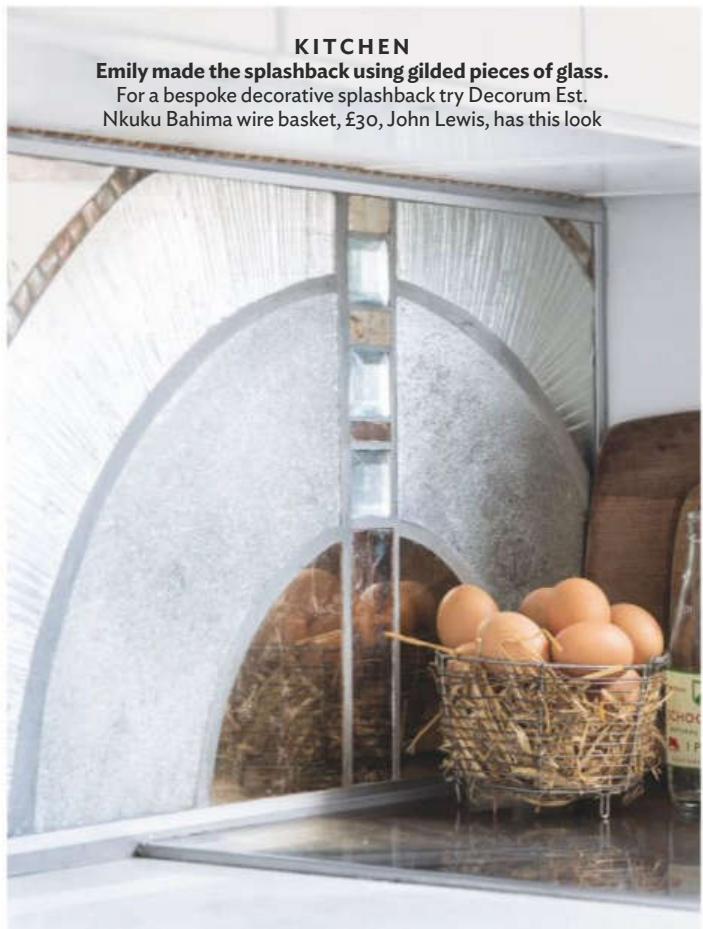
Tons of Tiles. Walls painted in

Skimming Stone modern emulsion,  
£42 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball

# VISUAL TREAT

*Artist Emily Swift-Jones has given the modest terraced home she shares with her partner John Steels a very special finish*

FEATURE HEATHER DIXON | PHOTOGRAPHY COLIN POOLE



#### KITCHEN

Emily made the splashback using gilded pieces of glass.

For a bespoke decorative splashback try Decorum Est.

Nkuku Bahima wire basket, £30, John Lewis, has this look

**INSPIRING****HOME TRUTHS****THE PROPERTY**

Mid-terrace, built in 1934

**LOCATION** East Sussex**ROOMS** Hall, sitting room, kitchen-diner, three bedrooms, bathroom**PURCHASED** 2008**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**

'Before moving here, we lived in a two-bedroom house in Brighton,' says Emily.



#### SITTING ROOM

**A**fireplace and tactile fabrics make this area warm and inviting. Adam New England fire surround, £349, Fireplace World, is a match. Cushions, from £70 each, Adriana Gentile Woven Textiles

**A**rtist Emily Swift-Jones has overseen the specialist decorating of a new gallery in Buckingham Palace, created glorious paint finishes in hotels such as The Savoy, and gilded a multimillion pound apartment in Monte Carlo. So decorating her own home in East Sussex was a walk in the park by comparison.

When Emily and her partner John Steels moved into their three-bedroom terraced, she worked her way through every room creating extraordinary wall finishes, wood effects and decorative glass. But that was only after the property had been completely renovated.

'Apart from having double glazing put in, the house hadn't changed since it was built in the 1930s,' explains Emily. 'There was a separate dining

room and all the other areas seemed dark and dated.'

To modernise the property, the couple decided to knock down the dividing wall between the kitchen and dining room to create a large open-plan space, and install contemporary cabinetry and hi-tech appliances. They also replaced an existing window with glass patio doors, which allow more light in and direct access to the garden, and fitted a new bathroom suite upstairs. All the plumbing and electrics were updated and the walls replastered. Many of the rooms now feature Emily's specialist paint treatment.

'I tend to do most of the DIY work,' she says. 'For many years, I was employed as a decorative artist on building sites, so I picked up quite a few skills along the way. By doing so much ourselves, we've saved a

fortune. John and I lived in chaos for about a year because a great deal of it had to be done during weekends and evenings. At one point, we had to take it in turns holding a drainpipe, coming from the shower upstairs, over the kitchen sink so we didn't flood the place every time we had a bath. It was all good fun.'

Fortunately, Emily and John share similar tastes in decor and there is little they disagree over. 'I trust Emily to always come up with something beautiful, because she has the training, experience and the vision,' says John. 'The house has become modern and comfortable with a touch of Art Deco thrown in.'

Emily also bought a lot of the furniture, particularly the 1950s and 1960s pieces, online. 'I'm a stickler for detail so I'm drawn towards unusual sofas, tables, ceramics and finishes,'

she says. 'I will spend months searching for the right thing.'

Today, Emily is focused on painting and her canvases fill the walls with colour and interest. After using the dining area as a place to work, she now paints in the garden studio they recently bought. 'Large paintings work well in small spaces,' says Emily. 'We often use my artwork as inspiration for a colour scheme. The design effects I've made for the walls and ceilings are subtle, but they add something unique to each room.'

Meanwhile, the house continues to evolve as Emily and John bring more bargains, one-off finds and unique art into the mix. 'We don't like it to stand still,' says Emily. 'Nor do we buy for a particular look. We combine antiques with retro, and textured plaster with gold leaf. It makes for an interesting home.'

**MASTER BEDROOM**

An elegant window treatment and silk bedding create a luxurious look. For a similar bedspread try the Albany collection, £275, The White Company. Antiques Atlas sells French tapestry-style chairs like this one, from £175



**FAVOURITE ITEMS** ‘I wouldn’t part with either of the paintings in the sitting room – they were designed for the space’

**GUEST BEDROOM****Watery tones look restful.**

Try the Georgian chest of drawers, £1,295, Antiques World. *Reflections* painting by Emily Swift-Jones, £850

**BATHROOM****Pearlescent tiles brighten up the neutral walls.**

Oyster mosaic tiles, £199.47sq m, Fired Earth, is comparable





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# Escape to the COUNTRY

Inspired by the remarkable surroundings of County Kerry, Jacqueline O'Driscoll took on the challenge of reviving two dilapidated cottages

**FEATURE** PENNY CRAWFORD-COLLINS  
**PHOTOGRAPHY** PHILIP LAUTERBACH

## INSPIRING



## HOME TRUTHS

**THE PROPERTY** Two farm cottages, converted into one

**LOCATION** West Ireland

**ROOMS** Sitting room, dining room, kitchen, three bedrooms, bathroom

**PURCHASED** 1994

**PREVIOUS PROPERTY**

'Before here, I lived in a London townhouse,' says Jacqueline.



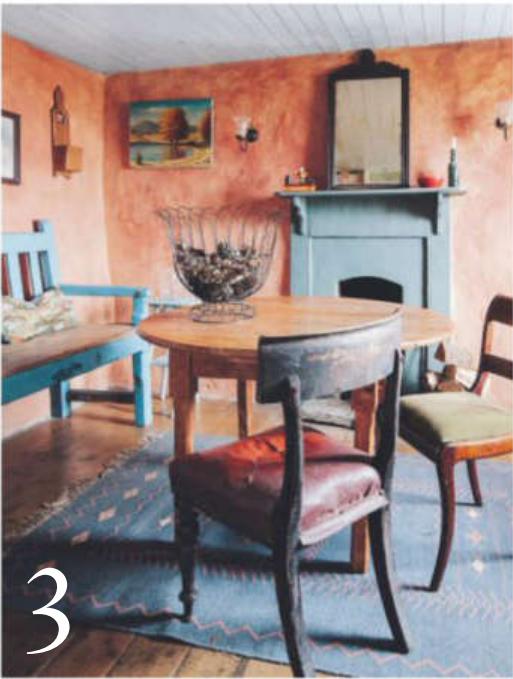
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**L**iving in London, artist Jacqueline O'Driscoll had always enjoyed escaping from the city and holidaying in County Kerry in Ireland, so it wasn't long before she considered buying a home there. 'The surroundings are very inspiring for my landscape paintings,' she explains.

'About 20 years ago, I was walking with friends in the area and we came across two derelict cottages,' continues Jacqueline. 'I discovered they'd been unoccupied for 35 years, but they were still full of old furniture and horse hair mattresses.' However, the scenery and the rural idyll eclipsed the cottages' sad state.

Jacqueline was completely smitten, so she decided to buy both the properties and, with the help of local builder Gerald Sheehan, she spent the next two years renovating them and knocking them into one. 'It was a huge task as absolutely everything needed doing,' explains Jacqueline. 'There was no water or electricity, and I had to fit a septic tank and find the old well, which I managed to do with the help of Gerald's mother, who remembered where it was located.'

To treat the damp, the first task was to hire a digger to create gravel-filled trenches so water could drain away easily. Then the walls were lime plastered to allow them to breathe. New central heating was installed and windows and flooring were replaced. The older of the two cottages – originally used to house animals – had a clay floor, so

**FAVOURITE ITEM** 'I love the woodburning stove in the sitting room, which was made locally

#### 1 MEZZANINE

This extra level takes advantage of space in the eaves.

Dorset Camomile dining table, £1,000, Laura Ashley, is similar. Herringbone throw, £89, John Lewis, is a match

work here, £299, The Rugs Warehouse

#### 3 DINING ROOM

An eclectic mix of furniture makes this area inviting.

Refectory oak table, £1,050; Refectory oak chair, £400, both Laura Ashley, are comparable

#### 2 SITTING ROOM

The fireplace is a strong focal point in this unfussy scheme.

Stove, from £500, RockHopper Stoves. Three leg oak stool, from £60, Rose & Grey, is near-identical. Raja Kilim rug would

'I love recycling old items for a rustic feel,' says Jacqueline.

Wood painted in Cooking Apple Green estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball

a damp course had to be laid before new flooring could be fitted, and the roof was replaced. 'I wanted to use local materials wherever possible,' says Jacqueline. 'I sourced slate from Valentia Island and the wooden beams were made nearby.'

Jacqueline decided to link the two cottages with a small corridor and, for additional bedroom space, she built a mezzanine with roof lanterns. In order to keep the cottages as light as possible, she stuck to whitewashed walls punctuated with greens and blues. 'I did introduce a darker shade in the dining room. It was actually the original colour for this space and it creates a nice contrast,' she says.

A local carpenter made the kitchen, which Jacqueline wanted to be as authentic as possible. 'I kept as much of the old furniture as I could, which I treated for woodworm and painted in classic hues,' she says. 'I also went to auctions, sourcing old items for a lived-in look, and I was given a few pieces from other residents.'

Just after Jacqueline finished the renovation, one of the children of the original owners called in. 'He took photos to send to his mother who was in her nineties and living in Canada,' she says. 'She was surprised to recognise her furniture and amazed it was still in use.'

Nowadays, Jacqueline spends most of her time in this idyllic spot. 'The landscape is ever-changing and it's so beautiful,' she says. 'Renovating the cottages was a huge amount of work, but I'm glad I did it.' 

*'from an old cast-iron buoy – it makes the room really cosy and has so much character'*

**5** MASTER BEDROOM  
**Blue hues create a calm ambience.**  
Lambswool throw in duck egg blue, £63, Northlight. Hemnes bedside table, £40; Årstdid lamp, £16, both Ikea, suit this style

Anna Davies, is near-identical

**6** GUEST BEDROOM  
**Tongue-and-groove panelling adds character here.**  
For a similar bed try Oliver Bonze design, £375, Feather & Black. Tweedmill pure new wool rainbow stripe throw, £50,

**7** GUEST BEDROOM  
**Painted floorboards define each area.**  
Knitted throw in red, £39, John Lewis

**8** BATHROOM  
**By just using one hue, this compact space feels larger.**  
Room painted in Parma Gray estate eggshell, £53 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. For details on letting the cottage, please contact jacqueline odriscoll1@gmail.com



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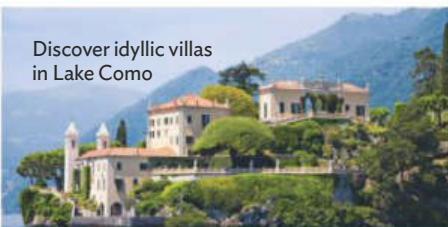


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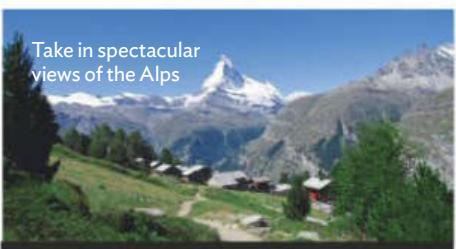
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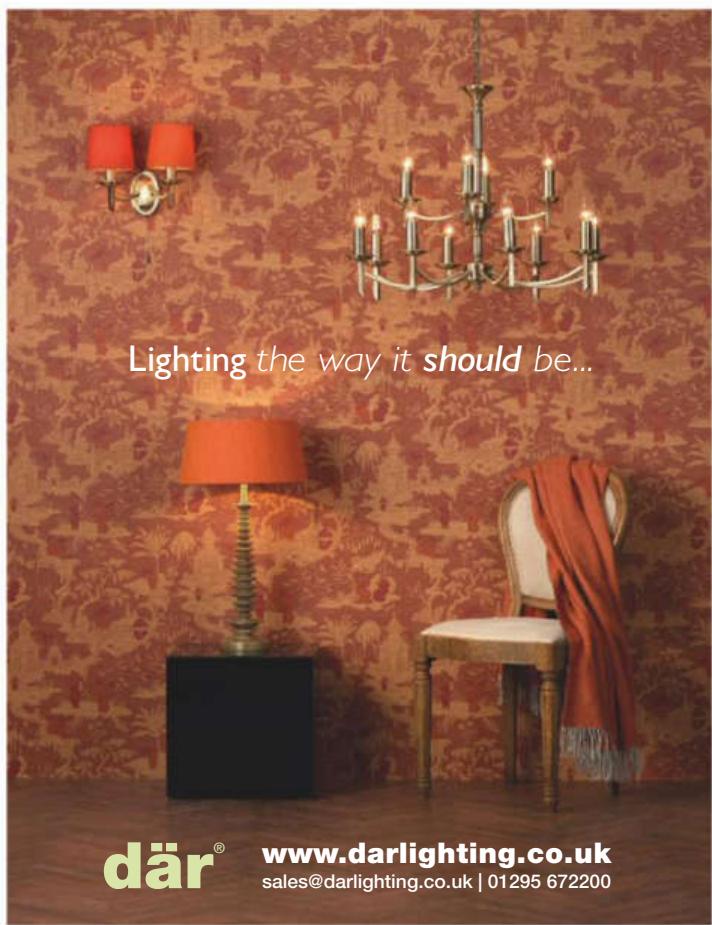
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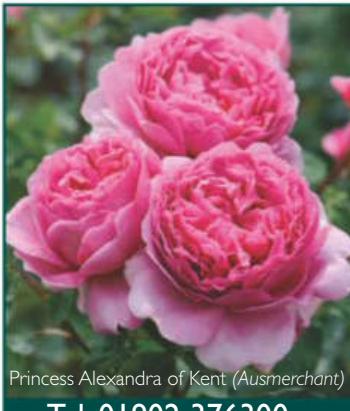
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Modern country style is displayed to perfection here, and shows what can be achieved with a simple palette

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The risk of a monochrome scheme is that it could look too stark and cold. But this beautiful kitchen-diner shows what a simple but essential difference wood can make. Rustic beams contrast with the chrome pendants, black worksurfaces are grounded by the wooden cabinetry, and the high-vaulted ceiling lends an airy feel. The black and white elements are no less

important, though, and are juxtaposed to striking effect. White crockery against black shelving is a display in itself, the dark cabinetry handles provide definition, and a pair of simple black spotlights above a range cooker mark out the cooking area.

With so many strong design elements, accessories are kept rustic and minimal, perfectly finishing this room where, when it comes to style, there really is no grey area. **25**

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